

LEADERSHIP EXPECTATIONS AND PERCEPTIONS  
OF THE FLORIDA FARM BUREAU FEDERATION

By

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Dedicated to Michael Carl Linzmayer,  
whose support and encouragement made it possible.

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The purpose of this study was to determine the leadership expectations and perceptions of the Florida Farm Bureau Federation. This study was conducted in three parts. The first part was composed of qualitative interviews with seven officials of the Florida Farm Bureau Federation; questions were developed to determine the expectations of state officials of county board members and the necessary leadership skills that county Farm Bureau board members should possess.

The second part of the study was a quantitative instrument, which was developed from the competencies that came from the first phase of the study. A sample of 280 county Farm Bureau members were given this instrument, which was comprised of four theme areas: leadership, political process, effective boards, and knowledge of Farm Bureau, with a total of 66 competencies. Participants were asked to rate how important

each competency was and how proficient it was using a seven point Likert scale. A demographic information section was also included at the end of this instrument.

The third phase of the study examined why Farm Bureau members may or may not participate in leadership roles, such as serving on their local county Farm Bureau board. A quantitative instrument was developed and included three parts: a motivation sources inventory, a semantic differential scale on volunteering, and a Likert scale, which measured perceptions of serving on county boards. This instrument also had a demographic information section at the end. The instrument was sent to a random sample of 420 active Farm Bureau members.

From the results of the county board member instrument, it was found that the largest “gap” between importance and proficiency competencies was in the political process area. Active board members were found to be motivated by internal self-concept factors and rated the evaluative factors of volunteering the highest. This study found that the best model for explaining why Farm Bureau members chose to participate in leadership roles explained 36% of the variance and included the independent variables: volunteering evaluative factor, volunteering activity factor, number of Farm Bureau events attended, member of other youth development organizations and participation in leadership development programs.

## CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Rural communities remain a source of identity for many people. Most of the rural localities established in the last century remain today, and their residents continue to invest in them with social value, despite changing economic and social relationships (Goudy & Ryan, 1982). Hobbs (1995) described the role of agriculture in communities as follows:

The special role of agriculture in the overall development of U.S. rural and community life is not simply attributable to production from the land. The actual form of production (large numbers of small farmers owning and operating their own land) in much of rural America contributed most to the institutions and organizations established to support agriculture and rural life. Despite local differences in organization, most rural people shared dependence on agriculture, the methods by which it was practiced, and the ideologies that surrounded it. This homogeneity of farmers' interests and practices helped reinforce the social foundations of the settlements. (p. 377)

After the Civil War, the growth of industrialization generated new markets for agricultural production, and the completion of railroads linked agricultural producers with the external markets. An early consequence of increased market dependency was the emergence of farmer's movements that provided the foundation for what would become general farm organizations. Agriculture led the way in breaking from local institutional constraints and connecting with the institutions of the larger society (Mooney & Majka, 1995).

During the late 1800s, the Grange and the Farmer's Alliances were two of the prominent agricultural movements of the time. The Grange was originally established as

a social and educational organization for farmers (National Grange of the Order of Patrons of Husbandry [NGOPH], 2004). The National Farmers Union (NFU) and the American Farm Bureau Federation (AFBF) are two organizations which originated in the period from 1900 to 1920 and are still active today. These two organizations, along with the Grange, were general farm organizations because their focus is a broad-based program of education, improving farm production and lobbying for favorable legislations to farmers. All three have an organizational structure from the local level to the state and national organization (NGOPH, 2004; NFU, 2003; AFBF, 2003).

These organizations are important in history because their programs generally were devoted to improving the well being of farmers and were initially mechanisms for representing rural interests nationally. They were instrumental in lobbying for rural mail delivery, rural electrification, and improvement in rural roads and highways, innovations that benefited both farmers and town residents (Hobbs, 1995).

The AFBF is an organization of over five million members across the United States (AFBF, 2003). Farm Bureaus can be found in every state in the country. The Florida Farm Bureau Federation (FFBF) has a membership of 151,645 and county Farm Bureaus in 61 out of 67 counties (FFBF, 2003). In some instances a “county” Farm Bureau may actually be made up of two counties and in another instance there are two county Farm Bureaus in one county because of local geography (P. Cockrell, personal communication, September 10, 2002).

Farm Bureau is

An independent, non-governmental, voluntary organization governed by and representing farm and ranch families united for the purpose of

analyzing their problems and formulating action to achieve educational improvement, economic opportunity and social advancement and, thereby, to promote the national well being. Farm Bureau is local, county, state, national, and international in its scope and influence and is non-partisan, non-sectarian and non-secret in character (AFBF, 2003, para. 2).

The strength of Farm Bureau from the county to the national level begins at the grassroots with individual members who decide to become active and take on leadership roles in the organization. In the corridors of power in Washington, D.C., all that seems to matter are the interests of the powerful agribusiness organizations that speak for large producers and maybe the environmental groups that have an upper-middle class constituency. While people in farming communities are small in numbers, they are a significant force within their districts and states and should not be discounted (Hassebrook, 1999).

In the past ten years, agriculture and farming have been dramatically restructured (Purdy, 1999). Hassebrook (1999) states that the family farm is dying and farm ownership is being concentrated into fewer hands. As the agricultural industry has become more concentrated, decision-making concerning agriculture has shifted from the independent producers to those in influential positions at the top of large agribusiness organizations (Swenson, 1999).

Present trends indicate that the family farm as the nucleus of United States agriculture is slipping away. There is a movement toward a dual agriculture. At one extreme are many small farms, most of them part-time. Fifty percent of all farms, as defined by the U.S. census, market only about three percent of all farm products. Most of these farmers depend on non-farm income for their living. They are not easily dislodged from farming (Breimyer & Frederick, 1999, paragraph 19).

As specialized commodity producers have grown in both the size and proportion of total agricultural production and as rural economies have diversified, another kind of

“farmer” has become important. These are “part-time” farmers, farmers who are employed full-time off the farm or have other sources of income larger than farm income (Coughenour & Wimberley, 1982).

Part-time farmers generally do not identify farming as their principal occupation. Their occupations and interests are diverse and they often do not share the interests of commercial agricultural. Commodity producers are more likely to view farming as “a business,” whereas the choice to farm part-time along with working at another occupation is more often based on a desire to practice agrarian values. The growth of part-time farms has come at the expense of the middle group of “family farms,” which is diminishing but which has long been regarded as epitomizing the agrarian values of the United States. Although the number of middle-sized family farms is decreasing, the impression of those farms as typical continues to prevail, especially in political debate over farm programs (Hobbs, 1995).

The widespread restructuring of the agricultural industry has also taken a heavy toll on those rural communities that depend on a healthy farm income to survive and thrive. A system of economically viable, midsize, owner-operated family farms contributes more to communities than systems characterized by inequality and large numbers of farm laborers with below average incomes and little ownership or control of productive assets (Hassebrook, 1999, p. 55). Historically, locally owned businesses tied to agriculture often provided a good source of jobs and revenue for rural areas, and reinvested profits in their community, creating a multiplier effect in which funds would exchange hands several times. In contrast, multinational agricultural corporations typically take their profits out of the communities in which they were earned.

Communities suffer not only financially, but also in terms of the quality of education, health care, and other essential services (Swenson, 1999). Christenson and Robinson (1989) state that “since the early ‘80’s, communities, especially rural communities have confronted a social, economic, political, and demographic environment substantively different from that of the first part of the century” (p. 197).

The agricultural sector of America is changing. In the 2002 Census of Agriculture, there were 2.13 million farms in the United States, up 0.1% from 2001. The increase in farms occurred primarily in agricultural operations with \$1,000 to \$9,999 a year in sales. The total land in farms in 2002 was 939.5 million acres, which increased 170,000 acres from 2001. A farm is defined as any place from which \$1000 or more of agricultural products were produced and sold during the year (United States Department of Agriculture [USDA], 2004).

The average farm size in the United States is 441 acres. The largest number of farms 658,804 are those, which are 50 to 179 acres in size (USDA, 2004). Figure 1-1 represents the distribution of farm size (in acres) in the United States.

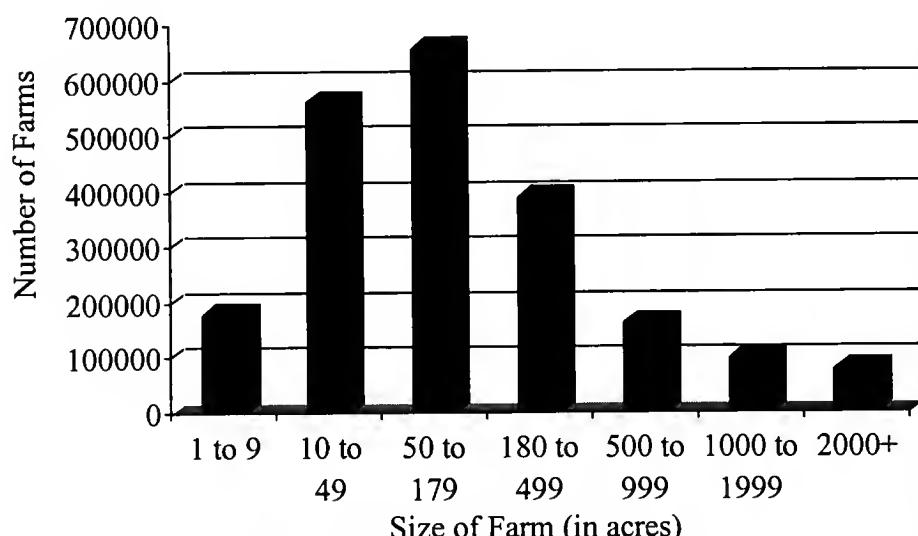


Figure 1-1. Distributions of Farms by Size (USDA, 2004)

Family or individual farms make up the largest majority of farms in the United States. The Economic Research Service (2004) defines family farms as farms, which are legally controlled, by their operator and the operator's family and includes all farms except those organized as nonfamily corporations or cooperatives. Over 1.9 million farms are family farms, which has increased by 250,000 from 1992. The average age of the principal operator of the farm is 55.3 years, which is two years older than in 1992. Those who make up the age group of 45 to 54 years old are the largest percentage with 572,664 (USDA, 2004). Figure 1-2 represents the age range of principal operators for farms in the United States.

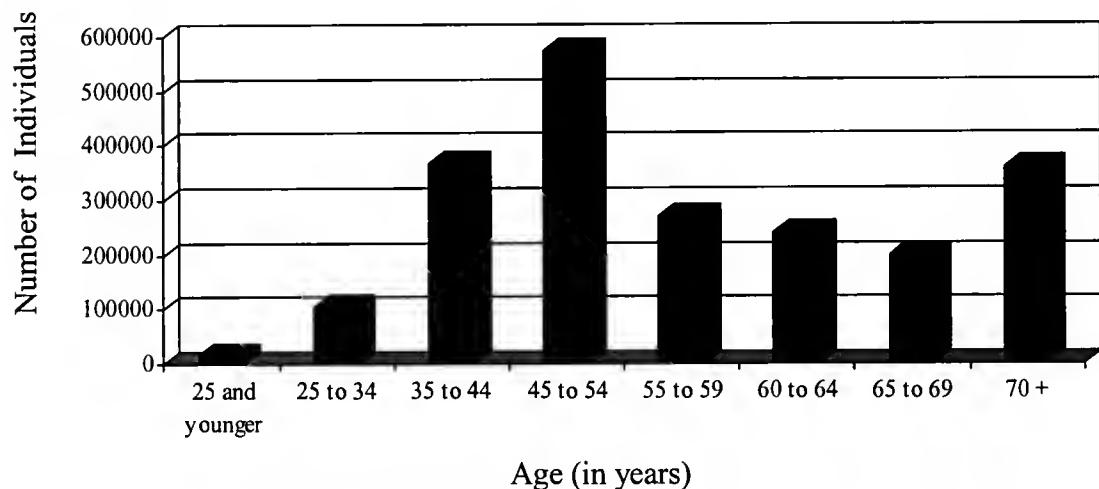


Figure 1-2. Age Range of Principal Operators (USDA, 2004)

The trend of growth of smaller farms is evident in Florida. There were 44,000 farms in Florida in 2002, which was unchanged from 2000 and 2001, but approximately 9,000 more than in 1992. The average farm size is 236 acres, 70 acres less than in 1992. There are 18,360 farms in Florida which are 10 to 49 acres in size, the second largest group of farms, 10,267, are those that are one to nine acres in size. There are only 842 farms that are 2,000 acres or more (which produce most of the dollar value of agricultural

production). Family farms are the largest type of farm, with over 37,000 in this category, which are approximately 10,000 more than in 1992. In Florida, the average age of the principal operator on a farm is 57, an increase of 1.5 years from 1992. As with the data for the United States, those in the age group of 45 to 54 are the largest group with 15,465 in the group (USDA, 2004).

The trends in the United States and Florida follow the shift in agriculture, which has many small “part-time” farms and large agricultural corporations, with a decreasing number of farms that are found in the middle of these two groups. There is a concern about the loss of these farms because they represent such a significant portion of all farms in the United States. In 1998, “91% of all U.S. farms were classified as small (or part-time) farms and these farms accounted for 68% of all land owned by farmers” (Duffy & Nanhou, 2002, p. 3). Critics of those concerned about the loss of small farms argue that farms are becoming larger to capture the economies of size. They believe that small farms are not “real farms”; instead they seem as just rural residents or retirement farms (Duffy & Nanhou, 2002).

One attribute of small farms is that they are almost universally part of a household. There are an estimated 1.2 million farms in the United States, and of these farms, 43% are owned by individuals who are classified as rural residents. This percentage of small farms means they have sales less than \$250,000 and they list something other than farming as their principal income (Duffy & Nanhou, 2002).

Those involved in agriculture in the United States and the State of Florida realize the need for people to step forth and provide a strong and educated voice to lead agriculture and bring the needs and issues of the rural community to the forefront at the

community, state, national and international level. A reasonable choice to provide this voice for rural communities and provide individuals who have the attitude/will/desire to participate in the leadership process is the AFBF. Farm Bureau reflects the future of agriculture and rural communities in its membership, the younger members who are embarking on their careers and looking towards leadership positions in the future (P. Cockrell, personal communication, September 10, 2002).

But why are those actively involved in agriculture not taking on leadership responsibilities in the Florida Farm Bureau organization? Do they lack training, skills, abilities, time or knowledge? Or do they not have a desire to lead? For those that do accept leadership positions, will they be able to become effective and provide strong leadership? Florida Farm Bureau realizes the need to provide leadership training for their members, but what training should be offered? This study will provide data to assist in answering these questions.

McCaslin (1993) theorized that sustainable rural development has been and will be realized only through programs, which focus on active involvement of human resources rather than a passive approach. Florida Farm Bureau is taking this proactive approach, realizing the need for leadership development and wanting to take the next step in designing a leadership-training program for its county board members.

An ideal leadership program reflects the diversity of the organization or community. The shared experiences and networking that take place within the program create a group of dedicated people who want to make a difference (Hustedde & Woodward, 1996). Because of the complexity of today's organizations requires the use of different leadership skills, and many organizations are concerned about the

inadequacies in leadership skills of their members and are involved in the development and implementation of leadership development programs. These leadership programs often offer ways to improve and develop the leadership capabilities of individuals (Sogunro, 1997).

A focus group consisting of county Farm Bureau presidents agreed that training for county board members should be improved, with one participant going on to state that it is “the very weakest link” in his county Farm Bureau’s program. The group concluded that county Farm Bureaus would benefit from training by the FFBF staff (Florida Farm Bureau Public Relations Division [FFBPRD], 1998). Findings from a study of those who went through a leadership development program found that those who participated felt more confident about promoting causes, were able to motivate others better, made more informed decisions on public issues, were better able to work with people and lead a group, and deal with local leaders better (Rohs & Langone, 1993). If the FFBF staff were to offer such a leadership-training program, it would be expected that participants would have similar experiences and results.

### **Background of the Study**

Leadership is not an innate characteristic; it can be developed through formal and informal training (Bolton, 1991). Leaders are made, not born. Most people have within them the basic skills and abilities to assume leadership positions, and one strategy for local capacity building is to promote the emergence of such individuals. An integral component to the efforts to expand the pool of local leadership is the focus on augmenting leadership skills. An understanding of the leadership process and an

enhancement of the potential local leader's information base are representative of this strategy (Christenson & Robinson, 1989).

Developing the full potential of the leadership base in agriculture is extremely important as this industry is facing new challenges such as environmental responsibility, food quality, international competition, taxation, and clarifying its own identity (Georgia Agri-Leaders Forum Foundation [GALFF], 2002). Rapid change is occurring in all segments of society, agriculture included. To keep pace with this change, informed, decisive, and communicative spokespersons are needed to represent agriculture (Kansas Agriculture and Rural Leadership, 2002). New technologies, consolidation, environmental concerns and food safety are some of the factors that are contributing to the rapidly changing face of agriculture in the United States (Duffy & Nanhou, 2002).

Foster (2000) states that leadership provides people a way to connect with and serve their communities, institutions, and organizations. This leadership is necessary as dramatic changes are affecting the social, economic, natural, and political environments of people in communities and cultures around the world. These changes present challenges and opportunities that demand effective leadership at all levels of society to ensure effective transitions and change.

Organizations can play a significant role by nurturing future leaders. They can provide the education and training necessary for the advancement of leadership among its members (Foster, 2000). Pernick (2001) states there are two advantages of building leadership talent within an organization.

First, the next generation of leaders is groomed by the organization and can instill the culture and agenda of the organization. Secondly, the organization has greater control over the supply of leaders with the necessary skills, which makes implementation of the organization's agenda easier and quicker. (p. 429)

Leadership development resides in the context of a community or organization and must answer the question, “leadership for what?” (Foster, 2000). This study will attempt to provide a basis for the “what” for the FFBF. It will provide research that will allow the state organization to customize a leadership development program for its membership with the expectations that after members go through this training they will have the leadership background necessary to become effective leaders not only in the Farm Bureau organization, but in their homes, businesses, and communities. The effects of a leadership development program for Farm Bureau members could be far reaching, but before those effects can be felt, desired leadership practices must be identified, existing behavior in current leaders must be determined, “gaps” between desired practices and existing behavior must be identified, current leadership practices must be explained and the motivators of individuals to take on additional leadership responsibilities must be determined.

FFBF needs a leadership-training program for county board members that range from having little experience to years of experience. They also need to know what motivates individuals who belong to the organization to become more involved. The organization needs to have its members participate more in the programs that are offered to the county Farm Bureaus and needs to have its members know more about the organization as a whole (P. Cockrell, personal communication, September 10, 2002).

### **Problem Statement**

American agriculture is at a critical juncture. If current policies and trends are left in place for another generation, there will be little left of traditional American agriculture

(Hassebrook, 1999). Instead there will be smaller, “hobby farms” and gigantic multi-national agricultural corporations.

Rural communities that are supported by agriculture were once the foundation of the United States and still make up large parts of the country, though rural communities are diminishing due to urbanization and the decrease of agricultural industries that provide the community base. McCaslin (1993) states, “one of the overriding concerns of those individuals working towards the stabilization and future growth of rural communities is the lack of active participation by many of its citizens” (p. 46). The process of stabilization and revitalization in agriculture begins with effective and active leadership and participation. As Farm Bureaus can be found in most rural communities in the country and in Florida, this leadership can be found in the membership of local county Farm Bureaus.

The problem leading to this research was: To keep a strong voice and presence at the local, state, and national level, agriculture needs qualified leaders who are willing and able to work on behalf of agriculture, rural communities and their livelihoods as agriculture in the United States and the state of Florida is rapidly changing. From this problem the following question arose: Why isn’t Farm Bureau more involved in “growing” and retaining leaders for grassroots leadership in local county Farm Bureaus. Three reasons were hypothesized: 1) there is a lack of infusion of young member involvement, 2) the attitude/will/desire among Farm Bureau members in taking leadership roles in their local Farm Bureau organizations is unknown, and 3) expectations of leaders is unknown.

From this problem, question, and potential explanations, the following objectives were developed to guide this study.

### **Objectives of the Study**

1. Identify selected demographics of county Farm Bureau membership.
2. Identify perceived leadership roles of county Farm Bureau leaders held by the state Farm Bureau leadership.
3. Measure the extent to which county Farm Bureau members practice the leadership expectations held by state Farm Bureau leaders and the level of importance they assign to those skills.
4. Determine leadership attitude, will, and desire of active Florida Farm Bureau members.
5. Determine reason why local Farm Bureau members chose to participate or not participate in leadership roles in local county Farm Bureau boards.

### **Significance of the Study**

This study added to the body of knowledge on grassroots organizations, rural leadership, and effective board membership. This study can serve as a model for other Farm Bureau organizations, or other organizations interested in developing greater participation in grassroots leadership. This is a critical time for Farm Bureaus around the country, as well as other rural and agricultural organizations, as they change to meet new needs of agriculture and the people who make their livelihood in this industry. The Farm Bureau of today faces many challenges and it will need to evolve to meet those challenges. In order for this evolution to occur, strong and capable leaders must emerge and assume leadership positions and responsibilities.

## **Overview of Methodology**

For this study, a non-experimental research design was employed that utilized both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. The first part of the study was a qualitative assessment that used a long interview format. These interviews were conducted with seven state leaders of the FFBF and were used to identify desired leadership competencies they believed county Farm Bureau members should have in order for their county Farm Bureau boards to be effective.

The second part of the study was derived from the content analysis of the interview responses. A quantitative survey instrument was developed by the researcher based on the identified competencies. In addition to the 66 competency questions this survey also included a section with questions to gather selected demographic information. The survey was given to a random sample of current county Farm Bureau board members to determine their perceived importance of each competency and their perceived proficiency of each competency.

In the third part of this study, a researcher designed leadership behavior instrument was given to a sample of active Florida Farm Bureau members to determine their motivations and their attitudes towards volunteering to serve on their county Farm Bureau boards. This survey also included a section to collect selected demographic information. These instruments were examined by a panel of experts and pilot tested with a sample population of Farm Bureau county board members and active members to ensure validity of the instruments and then were analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlations and multiple regression.

Several approaches were employed in this research design to aid in resolving the research questions. The long interviews provided qualitative information which described processes and relationships that served as the basis for the second instrument. Descriptive statistics were collected with the quantitative data provided in the second and third instrument. The descriptive statistics do not provide evidence of relationships but can be beneficial in explaining characteristics of individuals in groups. Correlations between desired leadership practices and the attitude/will/desire of leaders or those in leadership positions were also analyzed. These correlations investigate relationships of variables and how they vary (Black, 1999).

The two instruments given to the two groups of Farm Bureau members were ex post facto, or “after the fact.” This refers to real-life studies that employ some of the same measurement and statistical tools used in experimental studies. The difference is the lack of control over independent variables; life experiences replace researcher-determined treatments that would have been possible in a more structured, experimental design (Black, 1999). Examples of the independent variables used in this study include age, length of service to Farm Bureau, participation in other organizations (both agricultural and general), marital status, family status, gender, residence, and if they work off the farm.

Results of the survey to county board members and interviews with state Farm Bureau officials identified “gaps” within desired leadership practices that are expected by the state leadership in the FFBF and the importance and proficiency that board members place on these practices. Also identified in the survey given to active members were the motivations and attitudes that active Farm Bureau members have towards taking

additional leadership roles. These results were provided to the FFBF to assist in planning leadership development opportunities for Farm Bureau members in the state of Florida.

### **Delimitations of the Study**

This study used both qualitative and quantitative research methods. Respondents to this research design included leaders of the FFBF, county Farm Bureau board members, and active Farm Bureau members. Limitations of this study must be considered when applying the results. They are as follows:

1. The findings of this study can only be generalized to the population who make up the Florida Farm Bureau membership. Care should be taken in attempts to generalize these findings to other state Farm Bureau organizations, as the competencies of the members of those organizations and the leadership requirements of the organizations themselves may be different than those which are found in Florida. One could surmise that Farm Bureau organizations across the country would benefit from a study such as this and use it as a model to benefit their own organizations.
2. This study was limited to the current availability of literature on Farm Bureau organizations on the state and national level.
3. The research assumes the subjects of the study provided truthful responses, but bias may occur in the responses of the subjects.

### **Definitions of Key Terms**

The following definitions are used in this study.

Florida Farm Bureau Federation – The state Farm Bureau organization made up of the federation of the 61 county Farm Bureau boards in Florida (P. Cockrell, personal communication, September 10, 2002).

Active members – Farm Bureau members who are full-time farmers, part-time farmers, or farm managers. Currently only active members are elected to county boards or other leadership positions in the Farm Bureau organization (P. Cockrell, S. Butler, & R. Hemphill, personal communication, July 17, 2003).

Associate members – Farm Bureau members who are not directly involved in farming. These members are not eligible to be on county boards or state boards (P. Cockrell, S. Butler, & R. Hemphill, personal communication, July 17, 2003).

### **Conclusion**

The FFBF realizes that with the changes taking place within agriculture and society as a whole, strong and effective leaders are needed to keep agriculture and the Farm Bureau organization viable in the future. Younger members of the organization often do not take on leadership roles or if they do, are not as effective in these roles as they could be (P. Cockrell, personal communication, September 10, 2002). Realizing this, the FFBF would like to offer a leadership-training program to its members, but must understand and be able to articulate expectations of its leaders. This study provided the necessary research for the development of such a program.

The five objectives that guided this study are to (1) identify demographics of county Farm Bureau membership, (2) identify perceived leadership roles of county Farm Bureau leaders by the state Farm Bureau leadership, (3) measure the extent to which county Farm Bureau members practice the leadership expectations held by state Farm Bureau leaders and the level of importance they assign to those skills, (4) determine leadership attitude, will, and desire of active Florida Farm Bureau members, and (5) determine reason why local Farm Bureau members chose to participate or not participate in leadership roles in local county Farm Bureau boards. A background of the study, the significance of the study, delimitations of the study and definitions of key terms of the study were also provided in Chapter 1.

## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The purpose of this study was to determine the leadership expectations and perceptions of Florida Farm Bureau members. To accomplish this purpose, the study was guided by six objectives which were (1) identify selected demographics of county Farm Bureau membership, (2) identify perceived leadership roles of county Farm Bureau leaders held by the state Farm Bureau leadership, (3) measure the extent to which county Farm Bureau members practice the leadership expectations held by state Farm Bureau leaders and the level of importance they assign to those skills, (4) determine leadership attitude, will, and desire of active Florida Farm Bureau members, and (5) determine reason why local Farm Bureau members chose to participate or not participate in leadership roles in local county Farm Bureau boards.

This chapter will review the relevant literature that provided the background for this research. Specific areas of literature include: the history of the Farm Bureau and other agricultural organizations, political interest groups, grassroots organizations, organizational leadership, motivations of volunteers, social capital and agricultural leadership. As specific information or studies were limited about Farm Bureau boards and leadership, general studies were also examined and reported in this chapter.

These specific areas of literature are divided into sections in this chapter with headings that include history of Farm Bureau and agricultural organizations, political interest groups, grassroots organizations, organizational leadership, motivations of

volunteers, social capital and agricultural leadership. The chapter will conclude with a summary of the information provided.

### **History of Farm Bureau and Agricultural Organizations**

Rural America had two features, which historically contributed most to its distinctive forms of organization, the dominance of the family farm as the initial rural industry and the prevalence of geographically separated small settlements. The interdependence of the farm and town also fostered, and reinforced, agrarianism as a dominant, pervasive, and persistent rural value (Mooney & Majka, 1995).

An agricultural industry composed largely of small family farms dispersed geographically among small settlements were two of the most pertinent features of the organizational foundation of rural America. Agriculture as an industry became identified with agrarianism, and the dispersed settlements were the foundation for communitarian values. The combination contributes to institutionalizing of family farms and rural communities themselves, which then inspired many associated forms of organization (Hobbs, 1995).

Farmers in rural areas were soon aided with several pieces of legislation that provided the dissemination of research and information being conducted at the universities in their states. The Hatch Act of 1867 established the land grant university system and agricultural experiment stations. The Cooperative Extension Service soon provided agricultural agents in each county, and “county demonstrators” had spread across the south and into the north.

### **Creation of Farm Bureaus**

In 1914, the Smith-Lever Act was enacted which accelerated the spread of the county agent system. The Smith-Lever Act required states to pass legislation, which would govern the utilization of federal revenues. Many states passed laws, which required that a county agent could not be hired unless a local organization of farmers, a "Farm Bureau" was first established. These early Farm Bureaus were formed in the early 1910s, which was a decade of dramatic reorganization in the agricultural sector (Berlage, 2001).

The Farm Bureaus showed local support for the county agent's programs and created a source of funding for the agent's salary from the dues paid by members. The relationship between the Farm Bureaus and the Extension Service was questioned because the county agent, who was a public employee, had obligations to a private pressure group, the county Farm Bureau. To address this concern, many state legislatures and state colleges of agriculture began to separate extension from the local Farm Bureaus (Brown, 1989).

Following WWII, the accelerating rate of agricultural mechanization along with price supports and other new production technologies, expedited the substitution of capital for labor and increased the rate of farm consolidation. At the same time, land-grant university research and extension reinforced a transition from multi-crop general farming to specialized commodity production (Hobbs, 1995).

This transition was accompanied by new and different producer interests and therefore a change in the types of organizations which represented them. Farmers no longer automatically held interests in common but began to specialize along commodity

lines. Accordingly, general farm organizations became less effective in representing the interests of producers, for interests of different commodities were often competitive. New organizations, specialized by commodity, began to appear such as the American Soybean Association, the National Corn Growers Association, and the National Cattlemen's Association. General farm organizations, such as the AFBF differ from commodity organizations. Commodity organizations are principally devoted to promoting domestic and international sales of their commodity, affecting legislation favorable to commodity producers, and supporting research to develop new products and uses of the commodity. Their primary focus is national and international in scope, although most of the major commodity organizations have state and local associations in regions that produce the commodity they represent. They are unlikely to have a local agenda unless a local issue of direct relevance to commodity producers arises (Hobbs, 1995).

Specialized commodity organizations, such as the National Cattlemen's Association or the National Corn Growers are more effective in pursuing narrow policy goals than general agricultural organizations. The consequences to this piece-meal approach to policy making by many specialized groups is the neglect of the farming sector as a whole (Mooney & Majka, 1995).

During the early years of Farm Bureau, it was unique as compared to other organizations because of the strong financial support it enjoyed. High dues for membership, support from agribusiness, and effective governmental subsidization through the Cooperative Extension Service all contributed to a powerful resource base for Farm Bureau (Mooney & Majka, 1995).

There are two factors that have contributed to the success of the AFBF organization. First, it was created and nurtured by the Cooperative Extension Service, a public agency. The Extension Service organized local Farm Bureaus, helped in the recruitment of members, and favored those members with the allocation of goods and services. Second, the Farm Bureaus offered their members a number of services, from insurance to farm supplies (Hansen, 1995).

While scholars have concentrated on the AFBF's national political influence to explain its power, the local programs it offered were equally as important. Members participated in the organization to take advantage of the bureau's scientific, economic, and social projects rather than to gain national political power. The array of programs that local Farm Bureaus offered strengthened the appeal of the organization and helped to establish a strong power base in rural communities (Berlage, 2001).

The AFBF is the nation's largest farm organization with over five million members in all 50 states and Puerto Rico. There are 2800 county Farm Bureaus across the country, which provide programs that are developed to meet the needs of member families. Thousands of volunteer leaders serve on county Farm Bureau boards and committees (AFBF, 2003). Bob Stallman, AFBF President, stated, "whether at the county, state or national level, Farm Bureaus across the nation have always been loyal to the foundation of our organization—our grassroots members" (Stallman, 2003, para. 11).

Farm Bureau has endured its share of criticisms. In his critique of the AFBF, Berger (1971) stated that the AFBF claims it is a grassroots organization, which is truly representative of farmers. However, the organization has become more and more autocratic over the years. Policy positions are made at the top of a rigid hierarchy, while

attempts at the grassroots level to change that policy have been stifled. Another criticism is that the AFBF claims to be an organization made up of farmers, when a large percentage of its members have no relationship to farming. Membership has become little more than a device through which Farm Bureau products and services are sold (Berger, 1971).

In his 1971 commentary about AFBF Berger stated that, “the nation’s biggest farm organization has been quietly but systematically amassing one of the largest business networks in America, while turning its back on the deepening crisis of the farmers whom it supposedly represents.” Farm Bureau has been called an organization of and for large farmers (Mooney & Majka, 1995).

The AFBF was the dominant voice in Washington, D.C. with respect to farm policy at the end of WWII. This was no longer true in the 1990s. Browne (1995) conducted a study of agricultural organizations influence in the United States Congress, he stated:

Generalist organizations usually ranked by respondents as very active and involved but only somewhat influential include such high profile groups as the American Farm Bureau Federation, the Fertilizer Institute, and the Food Marketing Institute. The access and influence of those groups are not seen as the same, as is the case for interest that represent fewer and narrower claims. Organizations that can speak to the very specific needs of a commodity program or a distinct type of business seem to have a better transactional base within Congress and, as a result, gain better reputations for influence. (p. 372)

### **National Farmers Union and the Grange**

The NFU and the Grange also continue to represent large numbers of farmers in addition to the AFBF. The Grange was, “increasingly relegated to less agriculturally dependent regions and was not aggressive politically” (Mooney & Majka, 1995, p. 90). The NFU struggled with the AFBF’s increasing influence. The NGOPH, which was

established in the late 1800s, is the oldest national agricultural organization in the nation. Today, Granges are established in 3,600 communities in 37 states. Its 300,000 members provide support to rural areas and agriculture on a wide variety of issues, including economic development, family, and legislation designed to assure a strong and viable rural America (NGOPH, 2004).

The Grange is a grassroots organization that provides its' members a voice on the local, state and national level. Major objectives of the Grange support stewardship of America's natural resources, promotion of worldwide free trade, a combination of local and federal support of rural medical, communications, and road systems, and elimination of direct government farm programs (NGOPH, 2004).

The NFU is a general farm organization with a membership of nearly 250,000 farm and ranch families across the country. It is a federation that represents farmers and ranchers in all states and the presidents of the 24 state and regional farmers union organizations serve as its board of directors (Price, 2003).

The NFU was founded in 1902 due to a need identified by a group of farmers to join together to fight a common cause. Today, according the president of the NFU, Dave Frederickson, the NFU's education, cooperation, and legislative programs all revolve around member needs. This organization also provides a voice for family agriculture and rural America. Its primary goal has been to sustain and strengthen family farm and ranch agriculture, which it does through a grassroots structure with policy positions begun at the local level (Price, 2003).

In addition to the AFBF, the Grange, and the NFU, there is one other national farm organization. The National Farmers' Organization (NFO) was formed in 1955. It

originated as a protest group that threatened farm strikes to a serious collective bargaining organization that bargained with the buyers and processors of farm products (Mooney & Majka, 1995).

All of these agricultural organizations have basically one thing in common, they were all founded because a critical mass of highly motivated people decided that their likelihood of success in tackling a significant challenge would be much greater if people worked cooperatively toward a common goal (Stuart, 2003).

### **Florida Commodity Organizations**

In the state of Florida, there are numerous organizations that represent all the major agricultural commodities, which are grown in the state in addition to the FFBF representing the general agricultural interests. Two of the largest and most powerful are the Florida Fruit & Vegetable Association (FFVA) and Florida Citrus Mutual (FCM).

FFVA began during World War II to address the challenges facing growers at the time. Legislation had been passed that negatively affected Florida growers and those growers saw a clear need to organize so that the concerns of Florida's fruit and vegetable industry would be heard in Washington D. C. (Stuart, 2003).

The FFVA "has grown into one of the most recognized and influential organizations of its kind in the country. Its success can be directly attributed to the dedication and hard work of individuals who have served as officers and on its board of directors and committees throughout its history" (Stuart, 2003, para. 5).

FCM began in 1948 after the citrus industry experienced severe market fluctuations. Today, FCM provides the following services to its members: reliable market information, grower legislation, taxation, citrus research, Florida Department of

Citrus oversight, and non-price information. The reason it has survived and prospered is because growers, shippers, and processors of Florida citrus have coalesced to create an organization that has broadened its initiatives to meet the changing needs of its grower members (Florida Citrus Mutual, 2004).

### **Summary of history of Farm Bureau and agricultural organizations**

Farm Bureaus were formed in the early 1900s in response to changes in the agricultural sector. Farm Bureaus provided ways to disseminate research and information being conducted by universities to farmers in rural areas. After WWII, farmers no longer had common interests that were represented by organizations such as Farm Bureau. Instead, organizations began forming that specialized along commodity lines and represented the more narrow interests of farmers. These commodity groups pursued more limited policy objectives than a general interest group such as Farm Bureau.

Even with each agricultural industry and commodity having a national organization and frequently a state organization who represents them, the AFBF continues to be the nation's largest farm organization with over five million members in 2800 local county Farm Bureaus across the United States and Puerto Rico. The NFU and the NGOPH are general agricultural organizations who also represent farmers but have smaller memberships than the AFBF. The Farm Bureau continues to represent the political interests of its members on the county, state, and national level. The next section provides information on Farm Bureau as a political interest group.

### **Farm Bureau as a Political Interest Group**

Groups do not form spontaneously. In a simple society, there is little need for interest group formation, even though there are distinct interests in the society.

Economic specialization and social differentiations are crucial to group proliferation.

Technological changes and the interdependence of economic sectors create new interests and encourage the formation of interest groups (Loomis & Cigler, 1995).

Loomis and Cigler (1995) state that, “central to theories of group proliferation are the pluralist notions that elements of society possess common needs and share a group identity or consciousness, and that these are sufficient conditions for the formation of effective political organizations” (p. 7).

Economist Mancur Olson challenged the pluralist theories and instead proposed that individuals who share common interests are not inclined to join the organizations that address their concerns. Individuals choose not to participate and bear the costs of participation, because they can enjoy the benefits of the organization whether they join or not, the “free rider” problem. Groups that pursue benefits that accrue to all members of a segment of society will have difficulty forming and surviving (Olson, 1971).

As an organization, the AFBF has received extensive research and theoretical treatment by social scientists since the AFBF is an economic lobby, which represents a large constituency (Hansen, 1995). There are several controversies that exist regarding membership in political interest groups especially in the AFBF. The core of this controversy in this area is the importance of selective material benefits in the explanation of membership. Olson (1971) argued that coercion or the offer of selective material benefits to potential members would be necessary to induce them to join if the group was to overcome the “free-ride” tendency. The free-rider problem is especially problematic for large organizations as the larger the group, the less likely an individual will believe their contribution as having any impact on group success (Loomis & Cigler, 1995).

Other political scientists and economists (such as Salisbury (1969), Moe (1980), and Hansen (1985) believe that nonmaterial selective benefits and other factors (perceptions and efficacy) explain membership in political interest groups (Brown, 1989). The key to group formation and survival is the presence of selective benefits. These benefits are offered to only members of the group and can include: discounts, publications, and cheap insurance. The AFBF offers inexpensive insurance, which is a major inducement to join, even if an individual does not agree with the Farm Bureau's goals (Loomis & Cigler, 1995). The following services have been supplied as selective material benefits to Farm Bureau members: (1) wide variety of insurance programs, (2) regional and state purchasing cooperatives, (3) cooperative marketing programs, and (4) discounts on consumer goods (Brown, 1989).

Another area of controversy is the impact of economic conditions on political interest group membership. Truman's theory suggests that during hard economic times individuals will join organizations that work for improvement of their economic conditions. Truman theorized that two interrelated processes lead to group formation, societal change and disturbances. As society evolves and becomes more complex, new interest groups will emerge. Individuals are affected by "disturbances" which drive them to then support group endeavors. Examples of this can be found in the history of the formation of the major farm groups in the United States, such as the NGOPH, the Farmers Alliance, the AFBF, and the NFU which all emerged between 1867 and 1900. They were formed from an increased interaction of farmers in response to disturbances of their accustomed behavior. These disturbances included: technological change,

westward expansion, growth of corporate power, industrialization, and low commodity prices (Nownes & Neeley, 1996).

Robert Salisbury theorizes that group survival depends upon an exchange of benefits that is mutually advantageous between the organization and the members (Nownes & Neeley, 1996). Salisbury's view is that people join political interest groups during periods of prosperity when the cost of dues is relatively painless, and that when times get rougher membership in organizations is one of the first cost-cutting measures in which people engage (Brown, 1989).

Hansen (1985) theorized that people in different contexts have different resources and preferences, which indicates that they have different subjective weightings of the benefits and costs of participating in a group. When resources such as time and income are ample, people can easily bear the costs of participation. When people have particular needs and preferences, they are attracted to certain benefits. When people have different attitudes toward risk, they are more or less willing to engage in actions whose success is uncertain.

An individual will join an interest group if the subjective costs incurred by joining are less than the subjective benefits received from membership. As the information, resources, preferences, and risk attitudes change in making the assessments to join, the attractiveness of group affiliation changes too (Hansen, 1995).

Individuals are more easily mobilized in response to a threat than they are in response to a prospect. The collective benefits of group membership are increased with the awareness of threats. The effects of costs and benefits on group membership depend

on what is known about them, whether or not the benefits are wanted, and whether or not the costs can be afforded (Hansen, 1995).

Brown (1989) tested several of the most prominent interest group theories by examining membership in five state affiliates of the AFBF, but offered no concrete conclusions except for the need of additional research on why people join interest groups and what factors determine the membership levels.

### **Summary of Farm Bureau as a Political Interest Group**

The AFBF has received extensive research and theoretical treatments by social scientists, as it is an economic lobby which represents a large constituency. Several theories by prominent social scientists were introduced in regards to group membership such as: selective benefits, disturbances, exchange of benefits, and costs of benefits for belonging to organizations. In addition to being a political interest group, the AFBF is a grassroots organization which derives its power from its members on the county level. A discussion of grassroots organizations follows.

### **Grassroots Organizations**

In addition to being a political interest group, the AFBF is also a grassroots organization. Smith (2000) defines grassroots associations as, “locally based, significantly autonomous, volunteer-run, formal nonprofit groups that manifest substantial voluntary altruism as groups and use the associational form of organization and, thus, have official memberships of volunteers who perform most, and often all, of the work/activity done in and by these nonprofits” (p. 7). Throughout history and cultures, people have organized themselves to find solutions to specific problems through grassroots efforts (Wittig, 1996).

## **Identifying with Grassroots Organizations**

Important to grassroots organizations is developing a sense of identification with the organization. The development of group cohesion, team building, and increasing perceived social support may prove effective in enhancing the identification and further strengthening the favorability of members' attitudes (Hinkle, Fox-Cardamone, Haseleu, Brown, & Irwin, 1996). The development of a social identity serves to sustain membership in a grassroots organization. This social identity serves as a motivator for participating in a group. Individuals strive to maintain their self-esteem by committing to a group, participating in its activities, identifying with its behaviors, and adopting its symbols (Pratkanis & Turner, 1996). Bettencourt (1996) states, "grassroots efforts may succeed if they capitalize on initiating grassroots involvement by helping potential volunteers to become identified with the grassroots organization and on maintaining activism by encouraging cohesion and commitment among the members of their group" (p. 209).

By joining organizations, people are seeking the respect of their peers. They also want to belong to a group that gives individuals an opportunity where their contributions can be appreciated (Kaye, 2001). People join grassroots organizations because they want to be recognized for their leadership to serve members of their organizations and by members of other groups for their contribution to the effort to build a better quality of life (Kaye, 2001). Monetary funds, time, capacity, and skills of grassroots members, in addition to leadership, are resources that contribute to the success of grassroots organizations. They are necessary for the effectiveness and continued operation of grassroots efforts (Bettencourt, 1996).

## **Leadership in Grassroots Organizations**

To be successful, grassroots groups need to encourage the development of effective communication skills among their members. When working toward a goal, good communication among members is necessary to accomplish the planned action steps to get to the goal. The extent to which grassroots members and leaders utilize open communication will be reflected in the group's ability to resolve disagreements as well as reduce conflict, resentment, and member dropout (Bettencourt, Dillman & Wollman, 1996).

Leaders of grassroots organizations need to be aware that volunteers differ in the rewards they value and that these values change over time. Grassroots organizations need to offer volunteers a variety of rewarding and challenging tasks to sustain their efforts (Bettencourt et al., 1996). Brant (1995) states that, "one's personal values play an important role in propelling one toward grassroots action" (p. 185).

A lack of leadership in grassroots organizations may have dire consequences on the success of the group and the attempt to achieve change. To reduce chances of failure, grassroots organizations need to foster the leadership skills of their members (Bettencourt, 1996).

Negative factors that affect volunteer motivations are stress, burnout, and expenditures of time. "Although a certain amount of time investment from volunteers is necessary, grassroots organizations should be ever mindful to encourage volunteers to give only as much as they can afford and to avoid spreading themselves too thin with commitments" (Bettencourt et al., 1996, p. 173).

Grassroots organizations have less of a problem finding people that support their cause and more of a problem motivating people to act on their convictions (Hinkle et al., 1996). Bettencourt et al. (1996) reasoned,

The success of a grassroots group is attributable, in part, to the coordination and motivation of group members. The extent to which a grassroots organization encourages members to identify with the group may be important for sustained success. Group identity should facilitate coordination and motivation within the group. (p. 170)

There are different types of motivations, which may inspire individuals to work for grassroots organizations. One may be whether the fruits of the grassroots effort will directly or indirectly affect members of the group (Bettencourt, 1996).

### **Summary of grassroots organizations**

Farm Bureau is a grassroots organization. Grassroots organizations are organizations in which people create and join to find solutions to specific problems that affect them. Membership in these organizations is sustained by a common social identity with the organization and its' members. Individuals are motivated to join these organizations for many reasons, such as respect from their peers, benefits the organization provides, solutions to problems that affect them, and the satisfaction of working with others with similar problems to reach a common goal.

### **Motivations of Volunteers**

According to Scott (2000):

There are more than one million not-for-profit organizations in the U.S. with 100,000 more created each year. This sector depends on volunteers to help provide programs and services and financial support. Ninety-three million people, almost half of the population volunteers an average of 4.2 hours a week. (p. 3)

With every other adult already volunteering, the overall number is unlikely to grow. If non-profit organizations want to add to their activities they are already engaged in, or attract volunteers from other organizations, they have to make their volunteers more productive, which means giving them more work to do and additional responsibility (Drucker, 2001).

A majority of volunteer work is completed in associations or organizations. In 1995, 71% of the adults in the United States were members of associations, not including memberships to churches and synagogues. In 1991, 53% of the population participated in active unpaid volunteer work for non-profit organizations and associations (Smith, 2000). In 1998, survey results showed the highest rate of volunteer participation at 55%, while the number of hours volunteered per week fell to 3.5 hours. Though there are increasing numbers of people volunteering, fewer hours are being contributed by those volunteers, which greatly increase the risk of volunteer burnout (Safrit & Merrill, 2002).

Inherited in the legacy in America is volunteering on behalf of the common good. People are identifiers of needs, issues, and problems and expect to participate in the decision making on how to respond to these. Voluntary activities range from short-term events, which have a time limit, to longer-term commitments of service such as serving on a board. The choice to sit on an organization's board is an important decision (Scott, 2000). Safrit & Merrill (2002) stated that:

The concept of volunteerism in North American society has evolved. What historically began as individualized, altruistic behaviors founded upon strong religious tenets has evolved into a contemporary social movement driven by a wide range of individual motivations, and organizational and governmental incentives. (p. 12)

Penner (2002) defines volunteerism “as long-term, planned, prosocial behaviors that benefit strangers and occur within an organizational setting. Based on this definition, volunteerism has four salient attributes: longevity, planfulness, nonobligatory helping, and an organizational context” (p. 448). Longevity indicates a long-term behavior rather than a one-time occurrence. Planfulness means that volunteering is typically a planned action. Nonobligatory helping is the notion that the volunteer is not motivated by a sense of personal obligation to a particular person (Penner, 2002).

Drucker (2001) described the motivations of volunteers as follows:

Volunteers have to get more satisfaction from their work than paid employees, precisely because they do not get a paycheck. They need, above all, challenge. They need to know the organization’s mission and to believe in it. They need continual training. They need to see results. (p. 80)

Motivation depends on being effective and being able to achieve something. If effectiveness is lacking, the commitment to work and to contribute to the organization will soon vanish and it will then be just going through the motions (Drucker, 2001).

## **Motivation Theories**

The theoretical rationale on the roles of motives comes from Snyder’s (1993) functional approach to prosocial behaviors which are based on the notion that much of human behavior is motivated by specific goals or needs. To fully understand why a person is engaging in a behavior, the purpose or need served by that behavior needs to be identified. The fundamental concerns of motivational inquiry is understanding the processes that move people to action and the processes that initiate, direct and sustain action. Clary et al. (1998) describe the functional perspective of volunteering as encouraging the consideration of the wide range of personal and social motivations that promote sustained behavior. This perspective advances an interactionist position, as it

argues that consequences follow from matching the motivations of individuals to the opportunities in their environments.

From a functional perspective, people are recruited to volunteer by appealing to their own psychological functions, and they will be satisfied to the extent they engage in volunteer work that serves these psychological functions, and they will continue to serve to the extent that their psychological functions are being served (Clary et al., 1998).

Omoto and Snyder (2002) developed a conceptual model of the volunteer process which explains volunteering on various levels. At the individual level, the model focuses on activities and the psychological processes of the individuals which include: expressing their personal values, satisfying their need to help others, community concern, personal development, and to fulfill esteem enhancement needs. At the intrapersonal level, the dynamics of helping relationships between the volunteers and the recipients of their help are incorporated. At the organizational level, the focus is now on the goals associated with the recruitment, management, and retainment of volunteers. At the societal level, the model takes into consideration the linkages between individuals and the social structures of their society.

Cavalier (2000) proposes a triarchic theory of motivation, which proposes that motivation is comprised of three autonomous motivational systems: the formative system, the operational system, and the thematic system. The formative system includes the development forces that move individuals in a certain direction. These forces include: one's genetic makeup, learned behaviors, beliefs, values, social norms and attitudes, and conflicts. The operational system includes the assessments where there is a sense of

integration, choosing, decision-making and evaluation. The thematic system finds its roots in: 1) ego gratification, 2) self-actuation and 3) altruism (Cavalier, 2000).

Self-actuation is the motivation of individuals to seek ways to fully express their interest, talents and potentials as human beings. The people who are characterized by these motives may have talents or power over others by the virtue of their knowledge or talents. Altruism is the principal motivational theme for people who seek opportunities to help others (Cavalier, 2000). In rough terms, altruism is defined as an internal concept that refers to the tendency or disposition of an entity to help others (Smith, 2000).

Penner (2002) used data from 1100 individuals who responded to a survey in the *USA Weekend*, a Sunday supplement magazine carried in 560 newspapers, which contained an article on altruism and invited readers to respond to an online poll about their prosocial behaviors. This behavior is defined as an individual's empathy and feelings of concern and responsibility for the welfare of others. Results from this study showed that age was significantly and positively associated with the number of organizations and length of time spent working for an organization.

### **Motivation Sources**

Another instrument used to measure motivation sources was developed by Barbuto and Scholl (1998), the motivation sources inventory has been used to predict leadership influence tactics, transformational leadership behaviors and follower compliance using sources of motivation which include: intrinsic, instrumental, external and internal self-concept. It has shown to be reliable and valid in reported studies and captures the sources of motivation.

Barbuto, Brown, Wilhite and Wheeler (2001) describe intrinsic process motivation as when a person is motivated to perform certain kinds of work or to engage in certain types of behavior for the fun of it. The work acts as an incentive and it is derived from immediate internal gratification. Deci and Ryan (1995) describe intrinsic motivation as the innate, organic needs for self-determination and competence. Instrumental motivation is when individuals perceive their behavior will lead to pay, promotions, bonuses, or other extrinsic tangible outcomes (Barbuto et al., 2001).

Self-concept-external motivation is based on an individual who is primarily other-directed and seeking affirmation of traits, competencies, and values. The individual behaves to satisfy reference group members to gain acceptance and then status (Barbuto et al., 2001). Deci and Ryan (1995) describe this type of motivation as extrinsic motivation, the behavior where the reason for doing it is something other than an interest in the activity itself. It may be due to something a person feels pressured to do.

Self-concept-internal motivation is internally based. The individual sets internal standards that become the basis for the ideal self and is motivated to engage in behaviors that reinforce these standards (Barbuto et al., 2001). Internal motivations also are motivations for cooperation that flow from individuals' values and attitudes and shape their behavior (Tyler, 2002).

Loyalty or commitment to the group or organization can also be a motivation of volunteering as people in groups come to identify with those groups (Tyler, 2002). Tyler (2002) describes social identity theory as one that individuals in groups identify with those groups and merge their sense of identity with the groups and when people identify with groups they put the welfare of the group above their own.

When there is no identification with a group, if an individual believes that the organization does not represent their interests or if an individual is content, they may become apathetic and do not feel the need to participate. There is a connection between contentment and apathy as a content person may become lulled into apathy over time after deciding that withdrawing from an activity will not seriously jeopardize his or her future wants or needs, and thereby future contentment (DeLuca, 1995).

Leaders play an important role in creating and sustaining a group with which individuals can become loyal and committed to. The feeling of group identification encourages cooperation on behalf of the group because people merge their sense of themselves with the group. The important role of attitudes and values in stimulating cooperation suggests the importance of creating a supportive culture or value climate within a group. “Leaders need to stimulate intrinsic interest in group roles, identification with the group, and the development of moral values and feelings that group authorities are legitimate” (Tyler, 2002, p. 779).

The objective of a study done by Martinez and McMullin (2004) was to better understand the motivations and characteristics of individuals who participate in volunteer activities in comparison to those who do not. Results found that active members belonged to organizations almost twice as long as non-active members. Both groups had similar competing commitments on their time. Active members witnessed the effects of their efforts, witnessed organizational success and achieved a level of personal accomplishment; they believed they could make a difference. For those that were not active, the potential benefits and outcomes may have been important but unknown. This study, a longitudinal analysis, was conducted on the characteristics of membership of

voluntary organizations, “these characteristics are: (a) memberships over time are relatively stable, (b) most individuals will add and drop memberships in organizations over time but maintain at least one continuous membership, and (c) the occurrence of affiliation changes influence the structure and function of association” (Martinez & McMullin, 2004, p. 114).

### **Influences on Volunteers**

Penner (2002) identified the organizational variables that are likely to influence a volunteer’s behavior, they are: “(1) an individual member’s perceptions of and feelings about the way he or she is treated by the organization and (2) the organization’s reputation and personnel practices” (p. 458). In a study done by DeChant (2001), research showed that a person may be committed to an organization but the level of commitment cannot serve as a measure for the amount of volunteer hours they will actually perform. Volunteering in an organization provides opportunities to build stronger ties and commitment to the organization. For those that are not active participants, believing that they could not contribute effectively to the organization’s activities may be the reason why they do not actively participate (Martinez & McMullin, 2004).

Eisinger (2002) states “attracting future leaders is as much about knowing what you want as it is about knowing what members are hoping to gain, that’s another challenge inherent to attracting and engaging volunteer leaders” (p.3). Organizations who are interested in recruiting new volunteers would benefit by identifying the things that would motivate a certain target group to volunteer and then highlight those motives in their recruiting appeals directed at this target group. If an organization has difficulties

retaining volunteers, the problem is sometimes not a shortage of people who want to volunteer it is the attrition rate of people who are in the early stages of tenure in the organization (Penner, 2002). Why do individuals volunteer for organizations? Clary et al. (1998) state simply that:

Volunteers (a) often actively seek out opportunities to help others; (b) may deliberate for considerable amounts of time about whether to volunteer, the extent of their involvement, and the degree to which particular activities fit with their own personal needs; and (c) may make a commitment to an ongoing helping relationships that may extend over a considerable period of time and that may entail considerable personal costs of time, energy, and opportunity. (p. 1517)

Martinez and McMullin (2004) state “volunteer roles may appeal to people with certain lifestyles based on (a) ones’ position in a job; (b) whether one is employed full-time, part-time is retired, or is a home maker, (c) age and (d) the expectations and associated responsibilities of the role(s) one would fill” (p. 114). The success of the volunteer experience is largely determined by whether the volunteer experience meets the person’s expectations. The more that is known about those expectations, the more effort can be made to ensure the volunteer remains motivated (Eisinger, 2002).

Individuals are more attracted to organizations that have a good reputation for management that effectively used the talents of the volunteers. Poor management of volunteers is frequently the reason that people discontinue their volunteer service. In addition to effective volunteer management, organizations who utilize volunteers should have individuals volunteering who represent the membership that they are working for. There is increasing pressure for organizations to reflect a broader cross-section of the societies which they represent (Safrit & Merrill, 2002).

## Constraints on Volunteering

Martinez and McMullin (2004) state that in order to understand why people become active volunteers, it is important to consider why people do not volunteer. “Three reasons for nonparticipation have been identified: (a) individuals lacked the capacity to volunteer, (b) individuals lacked motivation, or (c) individuals had not been asked” (p. 113). This implied that both access to resources and capacity to take part along with motivation, are necessary for members to become active.

The generations of individuals who compose the volunteer segment of the population are facing different issues and pressures. Individuals who belong to the “baby boomer” generation are facing pressures of the needs of their children and their aging parents. Those individuals who were born between 1960 and 1980, the members of Generation X, are inwardly focused and less inclined to be involved. They are facing personal and professional pressures as they build their careers and families. Life pressures, particularly those of time and family are limiting the availability of traditional volunteers (Safrit & Merrill, 2002).

Organizations need to find ways to structure volunteer work, which will allow people increased flexibility to move in and out of volunteering as work and family pressures affect their lives. Turnover rate is influenced by the importance and structure of an organization, as well as age, family status, work, family stage, and life stage (Martinez & McMullin, 2004). As Eisinger (2002) states:

The needs of today’s time-crunched members, such as shorter-term commitments, may require associations to examine their traditional notions of volunteer service and how to attract those members to leadership positions. In addition, identifying and developing future volunteer leaders requires a commitment from the highest levels of the organization. (p. 5)

Organizations need to pay more attention to personal and professional development opportunities for volunteers that will increase their effectiveness while maintaining personal interest (Safrit & Merrill, 2002). Volunteers who are active must have certain abilities. Volunteers must develop the personal capacities to make critical decisions regarding their actions on behalf of the organization as they need to learn “how to think” rather than just “what to think” (Safrit & Jones, 2003). Volunteers demand training from their organizations. They want responsibility and expect to participate in making decisions that affect their work and the work of the organization as a whole. Volunteers also expect the organization to remove non-performers who are hindering the effectiveness of the organization (Drucker, 2001). Traditionally, training programs for volunteers have focused on specific subject matter, organizational, or interpersonal skills. They must also include components that challenge volunteers to develop important thinking and processing skills (Safrit & Jones, 2003).

There are several variables that determine the group’s overall effectiveness; how well resources are utilized (both personnel and resources), how members are motivated to perform, and how much teamwork and cooperation there is among group members. A deficiency in any of these variables is likely to reduce group effectiveness. The function of leadership is maintaining an optimal level for each of these variables (Yukl, 1994).

Current trends in organizational management and leadership are affecting the decisions that people make in their volunteer activities. Authoritarian management styles are being replaced by participative decision-making and teamwork and volunteers are seeking similar management styles in the non-profit organizations they volunteer with. Volunteers tend now to avoid authoritarian management and large bureaucratic

institutions, and are seeking organizations that treat them professionally and include them in planning and decision-making phases of work (Safrit & Merrill, 2002).

Further studies have shown that the length of tenure as a volunteer is positively associated with organizational satisfaction. “Volunteers who are satisfied with their job, committed to the organization, have positive affect while on the job, and believe they are being treated fairly should display a higher level of volunteer activity” (Penner, 2002, p. 459). Organizations that can design and manage opportunities for volunteers that allow individuals to make meaningful contributions in non-traditional time frames are more likely to attract a more diverse range of volunteers (Safrit & Merrill, 2002). The next section will address organizational leadership and how it affects the productivity of a group or organization.

### **Summary of motivations of volunteers**

Approximately half of the adult population in the United States volunteers a portion of their time to organizations. Individuals are identifiers of needs, issues, and problems and participate in the decision making on how to respond to these factors. There are many reasons why individuals volunteer and organizations need to understand what motivates individuals to volunteer and make the volunteer experience positive and meaningful to their volunteers. The organization needs to provide group identification for their volunteers so they can relate to the organization and the organization needs to provide volunteer experiences that fit with the individual’s lifestyle as factors such as gender, children, and life status affect the time an individual can devote to an organization.

## **Organizational Leadership**

An understanding of what the attraction is to serve and lead an organization, of what motivates individuals to become members of the board, of what causes those individuals to care deeply about the future of the organization, and of what helps individuals remain active and committed is vitally important knowledge to an organization (Scott, 2000).

Maxwell (1995) states “grow a leader—grow the organization” (p.4). An organization’s strength is a direct result of the strength of the leaders of the organization. Organizational leaders must be active in their organization, generate productive activity and must encourage and command changes in the organization (Maxwell, 1995). The survival of institutions depends on the capacity of “leaders to develop and maintain organizational cultures that foster and sustain autonomy and independence while strengthening the ability of individuals to care for and commit to the organization and the larger community” (Scott, 2000, p. 13).

Organizational leaders will need to be able to read the larger environment at various levels and know which level to focus attention on so their organization can negotiate change successfully. Not-for-profit organizations need leaders who can engage in the process of “systems thinking.” This is leadership that can understand the bigger picture without being pulled into tunnel vision or allow quick fixes of problems (Scott, 2000).

## **Organizational Theories**

The process of “systems thinking” can be better understood by understanding the different components or perspectives of an organization. Bolman and Deal (1997) have

condensed the major schools of organizational thought into four perspectives or frames. The frames are structural, human resource, political, and symbolic. Effective leaders understand their own strengths and work to expand them and build their teams or groups that can provide leadership in all four frames.

The structural frame emphasizes the organizations' goals, roles and relationships. Problems in organizations occur when the structure does not fit the situation. The challenge is to tailor the organization to the people who work within it. Organizations need to find a way for individuals to get the job done, while feeling good about what they are doing (Bolman & Deal, 1997).

The human resource frame believes that organizations can be productive, energizing and mutually rewarding. This perspective regards the skills, attitudes, energy and commitment of individuals as vital resources of either making or breaking the enterprise. When the fit between the organization and individual is poor, one or both suffer. Organizations may become ineffective because individuals withdraw their efforts and individuals may feel neglected or feel their abilities are needed or wanted. When the fit is good, individuals find meaningful and satisfying work and organizations get the talent and energy they need to succeed (Bolman & Deal, 1997).

The political frame asserts that in the face of differences and scarce resources, conflict is unavoidable and power is a key resource, the assumptions of this frame find the sources of political dynamics in organizations. The symbolic frame sees organizations as cultures, which are propelled by rituals, ceremonies, stories, heroes and myths rather than by rules, policies, and managerial authority (Bolman & Deal, 1997).

Duke (1998) stated that individuals are seen to occupy roles which represent sets of expectations and these roles are a function of social context and individual understanding. An assumption about human nature supports this “role theory” is that humans are capable of self-reflection and evaluation. Inquiry in sociological research must focus on understanding how people define situations, determine what is expected of them, and select courses of action. Role expectations become an important source of information for the study of organizations.

Organizing is as much a bottom-up philosophy and process as a method to win victories on specific issues as people are encouraged to take direct action on their own issues, not encouraged to look to others to act on their behalf. The greatest organizational mileage occurs when a group of members are directly involved in winning a victory. The lesson is that “we won because we are organized, there is strength in numbers.” Such strategies build a sense of ownership and control, empowering people through the process of organizing as well as through benefits achieved (Staples, 1984).

### **Membership in Organizations**

The growth of an organization depends on retaining members and recruiting new ones. Success depends on a combination of things: a shared organizational vision, an effective group process and a strong capacity for leadership development. The long-range vision of an organization is key to keeping and attracting new members. There needs to be a sense of community and the challenge of higher goals. More people will stay active in an organization if they feel they are taking part in something important and exciting. Some membership attrition is inevitable as people’s lives, actions, and responsibilities change over time. “Only by attracting and involving new people can the

organization renew and regenerate itself in the face of the natural tendency for people to lose interest, drop out, or become less active" (Staples, 1984, p. 122). The "apathy" of the organization's members is usually blamed for declines in organizational membership.

Most individuals are attracted to an organization because of the prospects of being victorious on an issue they have a stake in. Membership involvement is needed to win through collective action, which also helps to build an organization. Members do their part by participating, and hopefully there is a concrete benefit produced by the organization. When the issue is over, most members go back home, even though they are still members of the organization. If the experience was satisfying, they will likely participate again if it's in their self-interests to do so (Staples, 1984). Effective collective action depends on the active involvement of self-motivated participants. The commitment of organizational participants—to each other and to the organization—becomes a critical and a necessary mechanism for directing their behavior toward collective goal accomplishment (Robertson & Tang, 1995).

Roberson and Tang (1995) defined commitment as "a psychological attachment felt by the person for the organization" (p.68). The dominant orientation in organizational behavior literature focuses on commitment as an individual's attitude regarding their relationship to the organization. The role of commitment in collective action receives attention from two literature bases, the field of organizational behavior and rational choice literature. The organizational behavior literature focuses on factors that influence the quality of individuals' involvement and performance in the organization. A primary focus has been individuals' work attitudes and the individual and organizational characteristics that shape these attitudes (Robertson & Tang, 1995).

The rational choice literature focuses on how an individual's choice of behavior depends on the way they perceive and weigh the expected costs and benefits of alternative courses of action. The extent to which participants perceive each other to be credibly committed to the cooperative arrangement is important, rather than the level of individuals' commitment to the organization as an entity (Robertson & Tang, 1995).

Both organizational behavior and rational choice perspectives share the common belief that commitment is an important factor affecting collective action systems. Implicit in both is the notion that individuals with higher levels of commitment are more likely to engage in behaviors oriented toward the good of the collective. Commitment can motivate individuals to act cooperatively in pursuit of shared collective ends (Robertson & Tang, 1995).

The two perspectives differ in how they conceptualize the role of the mechanisms in building commitment in collective action. Robertson and Tang (1995) describe these two perspectives:

The organizational behavior literature emphasizes the role informal social mechanisms play in shaping individuals' cognition and values. The focus is on how participants internalize norms and values, and thus increase their personal commitment to social and organizational life. The rational choice perspective, on the other hand, views informal social mechanisms as a means of enhancing credible commitment and mutually beneficial gains among individuals. The focus is on how participants develop trust among themselves and pursue long-term mutual benefits. (p. 70)

## **Leadership in Organizations**

Staples (1984) states, "the person who acts alone has very little power. When people join together and organize, they increase their ability to get things done. The goal is to strengthen their collective capacities to bring about social change" (p. 1). "Organizations with the broadest base of participation usually develop the best leaders

and, in turn, those leaders help increase membership involvement. Existing leaders and organizers have the responsibility for expanding the leadership core and motivating, teaching, and supporting the new people who emerge" (Staples, 1984, p. 129). An organization's choice not to innovate or change with the times is the largest reason for its decline. Organizational performance is measured by its development of its people, its standing, innovation, and its productivity. Changes in population structure and population dynamics are important trends to watch in the future of organizations, as these trends will be the cause of an organization to evolve. The populations that comprise the memberships of organizations are changing and no longer remain as constant as they once did (Drucker, 2001).

A successful nonprofit organization focuses the organization on action by defining the strategies needed to accomplish the important goals of the organization. The most effective nonprofits devote much time on defining the mission of the organization. They focus objectives that have clear implications for the work of their members, both their staff and their volunteers (Drucker, 2001).

Northouse (1997) defines leadership as, "a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal" (p. 3). At the core of leadership are the ideas that leadership is a process, it involves influence, it occurs within a group and it involves the attainment of a goal by the group (Northouse, 1997). An important impediment to achieving leadership effectiveness is a lack of leadership skill. Skill is needed because the role of the leader is both complex and simple. Simple, because effectively functioning groups have a natural synergy that gives them momentum and complex because the relationships with group members are dynamic and constantly

changing, depending on the situation, goals, and the environment (Hersey, Blanchard & Johnson, 1996).

One of the fastest ways to build leaders in an organization is to train them. The most effective training takes advantage of the way people learn, from research it is known that individuals remember 10% of what they hear, 50% of what we see, 70% of what we say, and 90% of what we hear, see, say, and do (Maxwell, 1995). Leadership development programs that aid in the assurance of an adequate supply of effective leaders are a vital and continuing need in communities and organizations across the United States (Rohs & Langone, 1993). Leadership development builds the capacity of local leaders and citizens. This means enhancing the potential of individuals to solve problems. It is done by engaging citizens and organizations to identify needs, resources, and opportunities (Hustedde & Woodward, 1996).

A major responsibility of an organization is to cultivate leadership skills and pass on that knowledge to the next generation of leaders. Because of retirement, many organizations are facing a high turnover rate, which means that the leaders of tomorrow could look, and think a lot differently, about their commitment and role within the organization (Eisinger, 2002). Eisinger (2002) continues by stating, “once associations identify future volunteer leaders, they must offer specific training programs” (p.14). Much of this training needs to be directed towards those volunteers who are serving on organizational boards as they sometimes lack the necessary skills to be effective board members.

Many non-profits have a functioning board. Those that serve on the boards have a personal commitment to the organization’s cause. Most board members should have a

deep knowledge and understanding about the organization. The key to making the board effective is organizing the work of the board (Drucker, 2001).

The board of an organization should reflect the makeup of the membership, which includes people of different backgrounds, ethnicities, ages, and interest. If the board has been homogeneous in the past, it needs to broaden its horizons and welcome new ideas that emerge from interactions among different groups (Eisinger, 2002).

Tweeten (2002) states, “dynamic, visionary boards are absolutely critical to the future of nonprofit, service delivery organizations” (p. 1). Twenty-first century boards are facing inevitable changes as a result of dramatic and continuing societal changes. These changes include, the way people learn, the way they view authority, philanthropy, and non-profit organizations, and the way they live, work, and play with emphasis on self-development, independence, flexibility, rapidly moving technology, and family (Tweeten, 2002).

In the past, some boards with weak board members may have been able to operate inefficiently and still get by, but this will not be possible as organizations face the transformation process that is inevitable if they are to be successful. Boards can no longer afford to be dysfunctional. There is a dangerous tendency for some boards to be so attached to their past that they overvalue their history and are reluctant to embrace the necessary change that will make them effective (Tweeten, 2002).

### **Organizational Changes for the Future**

There are several ways organizations will have to change to remain viable and effective in the future. Organizations need to realize that there are other ways for the meaningful involvement of people in their organizations other than on their boards.

Boards will need to be more resourceful and their membership more diverse to accurately reflect the population they represent. Board members will have to be team players, with the ability to work effectively in a group. Board members will need to make intense commitments to their board responsibilities. This commitment may result in board members cycling in and out appropriately, depending on their available time to be fully engaged as they serve on the board. Commitments may be shorter but more concentrated (Tweeten, 2002).

A study by Bright (2001) on the commitment of board members suggested that individuals believe that commitment among board members is essential to the effective functioning of boards. When board members served primarily because they had an emotional attachment to the organization, the board experienced higher performance, though passions and personal experiences individuals bring to the cause often obscure objective thinking and may thwart the success of the organization. Research has suggested that ideal board members are personally affected by the problem(s) the organization focuses on. It has also shown that board members who care, but have some distance from the issue are best because they are able to make difficult decisions for the good of the organization as a whole, based on facts, not emotions (Bright, 2001).

Whether volunteering on an organizational board or for the organization in general, it is important that the group has common goals. Hersey et al. (1996) state “research has consistently shown that group productivity is highest in those groups in which techniques are used that simultaneously further the attainment of group goals and bring fulfillment of the needs of individual group members” (p. 363).

The goals of an organization help shape the organizational leaders as do the context, norms and values of the organization and determine the effectiveness of a group. Two conditions that face all organizations and their leaders are external adoption and internal integration. External adaptation is the idea that all organizations fit a context; the survival of the organization is contingent on the organization's ability to address the needs and expectations of its environment. Internal integration is the assurance that all members of the organization value and pursue the goals of the organization (Duke, 1998).

Effective groups are those in which the needs of the group are harmonious with the needs of the individuals. Individual needs may be different for each group member. The key to individual needs satisfaction is that those needs are dependent upon the accomplishment of the group goals. The degree to which individual need satisfaction is achieved differentiates those effective groups from ineffective ones (Hersey et al., 1996).

The shifting demographic trends may make it necessary for organizations to modify their approach to volunteerism and how leadership opportunities are structured. Differing leadership styles need to be considered. Keeping the interest levels high in volunteers is not achieved by increasing their responsibilities, instead, they need to feel like they have ownership in the association (Eisinger, 2002).

Those who volunteer are less interested in serving in long-term commitments and in a designated role for the entire year, and are more willing to work on one project and see it through to completion. Organizations are learning that the more you give board members to do, the more they tend not to return (Eisinger, 2002). Washbush (1998) states, "personal motivation, self-assessment, diagnostic skills coupled with vision, and

the ability to communicate are fundamentally important to one who aspires to have an impact in the organization" (p. 251).

Sorcher and Brant (2002) state, "homogenous groups often run more smoothly, but they lack the synergistic power of a diverse team of people with talents, skills, and characteristics that complement one another" (p. 80). Exceptional leaders are willing to take risks by picking people who are not like them and who may have different leadership styles.

There are several trends that need to be addressed by nonprofit boards: (1) limited availability of board members, (2) lack of preparation of board members, (3) lack of recruitment strategies, (4) board members who are on too many boards, and (5) board members who do not understand their roles (Tweeten, 2002). Many organizations do not have procedures in place to identify or recruit potential leaders. Potential leaders are sometimes assessed based on hearsay, observations, and insufficient information. The process of identifying these future leaders is not simple or straightforward as leadership is a complex, multifaceted capability (Sorcher & Brant, 2002).

Organizations need to consider these trends as many organizations are struggling with a shortage in leadership, though in these organizations, there may be a lot of leadership talent that goes unused. Leaders tend to favor other potential leaders with backgrounds, experiences, and characteristics that are similar to their own. Often promising potential leaders are overlooked because of differences in gender, race, or cultural, academic, socioeconomic, or geographical background (Sorcher & Brant, 2002).

Leaders are managers of group dynamics. They are a key component to the effectiveness of any group. Effective leaders will recognize the variations among

individual members in their abilities and willingness to do a job and assign work roles accordingly. Effective leaders are sensitive to the natural cycle of commitment to long-term projects and provide the necessary support to sustain commitment over prolonged periods (Garkovich, 1984).

“If we assume that leaders are made, not born, and that most people have within them the basic skills and abilities to assume leadership positions, then one strategy for local capacity building is to promote the emergence of such individuals” (Garkovich, 1984, p. 209). This can be done through organized leadership development programs.

A climate needs to be generated in an organization where the members feel that they are heard, supported, and have a sense that the organization is open to new ideas. This generates interest and encourages the members to stay involved (Eisinger, 2002). Organizations need to retain its volunteers to remain effective and viable into the future.

Effective leadership combines both altruism and authority. It is respectful of the need for individual interests and also considerate of the common good (Scott, 2000). Scott (2000) defines altruism as “caring for the welfare of others; it is the ability to be concerned about the condition or state of being of another human and to acknowledge and meet the needs of the other” (p. 23). Authority is the degree of power exercised by an individual, organization, or group in order to perform important functions to those over which the authority is exercised. These concepts build into the ideas of social capital and civic engagement, which will be examined in the next section.

### **Summary of organizational leadership**

The strength of an organization is a direct result of the organization’s leadership. The growth of an organization depends on retaining members and recruiting new ones.

Individuals will continue to be involved in an organization if they feel they are participating in something important and exciting. Individuals are attracted to organizations because of the prospects of being victorious on an issue they have a stake in. An organization has the responsibility to provide leadership development opportunities to individuals to further develop their leadership skills.

### **Social Capital**

Social capital is a collective concept that has its basis in individual behavior, attitudes, and predispositions. Multiple institutions nurture the habits and values that give rise to social capital, including community and other voluntary associations, families, church organizations, and cultural patterns. Scholarly interest in the development of social capital is motivated primarily by the linkage between levels of social capital and collective outcomes (Brehm & Rahn, 1997, p. 999).

The more citizens participate in organizations and their communities, the more they learn to trust others; the greater the trust of others, and the more likely they are to participate. Social capital is the reciprocal relationship between civic participation and interpersonal trust. Brehm and Rahn (1997) believe that, “civic engagement and generalized trust, and the dynamic that sustains them, have important consequences for the polity, specifically, citizens’ confidence in political institutions” (p. 1003).

According to Garkovich (1984), associations and organizations, “provide the locus in which individual interests are articulated and translated into action goals, and humans and other resources are mobilized for goal accomplishment” (p. 199).

Scheufele and Shah (2000) propose that the process through which social capital is maintained is a three-way relationship among civic engagement (group memberships

and civic participation), life satisfaction (contentment with respect to present condition and future prospects), and interpersonal trust. The theory of social capital presumes that the more people connect with each other, the more they trust each other. Civic engagement refers to people's connections with the life of their communities (Scheufele & Shah, 2000).

In the social field paradigm, social action is the pivotal element. It is in social action that various individuals and associations come to orient their activities around overlapping interests (Garkovich, 1984). Christenson and Robinson (1989) discuss social action as the key component in the social field paradigm. The underlying process of the social action framework, is one in which associations are linked through common interests to act together toward mutually defined goals. The process depends on effective leadership, leadership that can anticipate change, identify action programs, contribute to informed decisions, stimulate support, attract resources, and manage group behavior. Leadership involves both the ability to organize and sustain task performance and arouse or stimulate others to join in the task (Garkovich, 1984; Christenson & Robinson, Jr., 1989).

An essential characteristic of a properly functioning society is engagement in civic activities because cooperative actions enable citizens to efficiently pursue common goals. Self-confident leaders are more trusting in other people, they are satisfied with their life and their achievements, and they are more likely to engage in various forms of community activities. A grassroots political movement is a social capital-intensive form of political participation (Scheufele & Shah, 2000).

The trend in civic engagement, shown by membership records of organizations, has declined by roughly 25 to 50% over the last three decades. There are many reasons why social capital has eroded: time pressures, economic hard times, residential mobility, suburbanization, movement of women to the paid work force, disruption of marriage and family times, the electronic revolution and other technological changes. A social trend which influences social capital and coincides with the downturn in civic engagement is the breakdown of the traditional family unit. Since the family is a key form of social capital, its eclipse is part of the explanation for the reduction in joining and trusting in the wider community (Scheufele & Shah, 2000).

Married men and women do rank higher on measures of social capital. Men and women, divorced, separated, and never-married, are significantly less trusting and less engaged civically than married people. Married men and women are a third more trusting and belong to about 15 to 25% more groups than comparable single men and women. Women belong to fewer voluntary organizations than men and older people belong to more organizations than young people (Scheufele & Shah, 2000).

Social capital is features of life, networks, norms, and trust that enable participants to act together to more effectively pursue shared objectives (Scheufele & Shah, 2000). It has been shown that a greater number of social ties increased the likelihood that a group will be more successful in organizing for concerted action (O'Brien, Hassinger, Brown & Pinkerton, 1991). Social capital is important when discussing agricultural organizations as social capital has strong influences in these organizations.

## **Summary of Social Capital**

Social capital is the reciprocal relationship between civic participation and interpersonal trust. It presumes that the more people connect with each other, the more they trust each other. From this theory comes the notion of social action in which individuals and groups orient their activities around overlapping interest. There has been a decline in social capital because of time pressures, difficult economic times and changes in the family structure. This has caused a decline in civic participation.

## **Agricultural Leadership**

When discussing leadership in agricultural organizations, the leaders have traditionally been male. With recent demographic shifts in the volunteers of organizations, more women will become a part of these organizations, but to understand agriculture and agricultural organizations, it is important to look at the past and the influence that men have had on these organizations.

Family farmers lack the power of individual survival almost by their very nature. The reason lies in the psychology of the individual farmer, whose concentration on his own operation tends to distract him from concern for factors that affect farming as a whole. This has been referred to as family farming's "non-instinct for self-preservation" (Breimyer & Frederick, 1999).

Men are driven to succeed, with their masculinity tied to career success and the ability to be the breadwinner and provide for their family. They are likely to be supportive of Type A behavior, which reveres rationality and tough-mindedness. Men show that they are in command of the situation and carry out tasks with confidence, even when those tasks seem insurmountable (Lindsey, 1994).

Weigel (2003) theorizes that growing up male is “often characterized by an emphasis on independence, competition, emotional restraint, and maintaining the upper hand in relationships.” Beliefs about how men ought to behave are constructed at many levels in society and in the minds of men. This masculine identity is generated by the media, teachers, historians, parents, and public figures and dominates how men think about themselves. Men in any subgroup, such as farmers, tend to share the same cultural history and have similar notions about behavior. This identity leads to four traditional attitudes about masculinity: (1) men should not be feminine, (2) men should strive to be respected for successful achievement, (3) men should never show weakness, and (4) men should seek adventure and risk (Weigel, 2003). In addition to looking at the psychology of men, investigating leadership in other agricultural organizations is important in this review of literature, as it could possibly be a basis for leadership development in other agricultural organizations.

Kajer (1996) conducted a study with nine agricultural leaders in Minnesota regarding their leadership experiences. Kajer found that volunteer leaders in agricultural organizations define their leadership in a range of processes and roles, with the most important being facilitating group cooperation and decisions. These leaders are concerned with the struggle to maintain and build memberships, and find and develop future leaders for agricultural organizations. With state level volunteer positions, volunteer leadership in agricultural organizations can result in large sacrifices by the individual in lost time with family and business and unreimbursed expenses in time and travel. Those who do take leadership positions become energized by the experience and dedicate much time to the organization during their key leadership position years.

Volunteer leaders believe that their leadership experiences made their lives fuller, increased their self-esteem and expanded their horizons (Kajer, 1996).

In a study of volunteer leaders in agricultural organizations, the motivations to serve in leadership roles in agricultural organizations were found to be a concern for people, the responsibility to support their profession, it's something they believe in, it's an outlet for their talents, it's a source of enjoyment and satisfaction, it's their duty to use their talents in service to others, and they believe they owe it to their industry (Kajer, 1996).

In Kajer's study of volunteer leaders (1996), the importance of being asked to take on a particular leadership role was emphasized. When individuals are asked to serve, it affirms the confidence of others in their leadership abilities, which also raises their individual self-confidence and firms their resolve not to let the people down who asked them. Those that participated in this study felt that the "asking" could be improved by treating it as a grooming process for leadership rather than a single request.

Respondents to the study of volunteer leaders in agricultural organizations felt there is little involvement of women in most agricultural organizations as active members and especially as leaders. There is a great deal of leadership potential being wasted with the absence of women. Increased involvement of women would increase the pool of leaders and make available the special talents and interests that women have. The "good old boys network" continues to be a barrier for women with the stereotyping of women's roles continued to be reinforced by both genders at the family, community, and organization levels. A general consensus has been found that the process of breaking

down gender barriers is slower in rural communities and organizations than in society as a whole (Kajer, 1996).

There are issues that will affect agricultural organizations and their leaders now and in the future. One set of issues revolves around the trend to larger and fewer farms and the effect this has on rural communities, agricultural organizations and on agriculture's influence. Another set of issues are the challenges of technology and information overload to members in the agricultural community especially those older members who are not as comfortable working within technology. Leaders will need a broader perspective on the world in the future and how agriculture fits into this larger picture (Kajer, 1996).

### **Summary of Agricultural Leadership**

The leaders of agricultural organizations have traditionally been male, but more women are becoming involved in agricultural organizations and in leadership roles in these organizations. A study conducted with leaders of agricultural organizations found that agricultural leaders are concerned with maintaining and building memberships and finding and developing future leaders for the organization. Changes in agriculture, technology and demographics are issues that will affect agricultural organizations in the future.

### **Summary**

This chapter focused on the areas of literature important to this study, which were: history of Farm Bureau and agricultural organizations, political interest groups, grassroots organizations, motivations of volunteers, organizational leadership, social capital and agricultural leadership.

Farm Bureau is the largest general agricultural organization that represents farmers throughout the United States and Puerto Rico. It has been representing the needs of its members for one hundred years through grassroots efforts that begin with members at the county level. Because of the changes in agriculture and the prominence of commodity organizations that serve specific segments of the agricultural industry, Farm Bureau needs to find ways to recruit, retain, and encourage its members to take on additional leadership roles within the Farm Bureau organization.

An understanding of volunteers and what motivates individuals to join organizations and assume roles in those organizations is necessary for organizations in order for those organizations to more effectively utilize their volunteers and make their efforts productive. Individuals need to identify with the organization and its members and feel that they are accomplishing organizational objectives. Organizations should realize that they are competing with other time pressures on an individual and should consider restructuring volunteer tasks to meet the needs of the volunteer.

Another factor in an individual's likelihood to join and participate in an organization is the organization itself and the leadership that guides it. Organizations should develop the leadership within to produce new leaders for tomorrow and to increase the leadership skills of existing leaders to make their organizations more effective. One way to do this is to offer leadership development opportunities and leadership training to individuals in the organization.

Agricultural organizations need to consider the motivations of volunteers and their organizational leadership as agriculture is facing many changes, such as farm sizes,

technology and shifts in demographics. If these organizations do not take measures to evolve with these changes, they may not remain productive and viable in the future.

## CHAPTER 3 METHODS

Chapter 1 provided an introduction and the background of this study of the leadership expectations and perceptions of Florida Farm Bureau members, especially those who serve (or who may serve) on their local county boards. An overview of the methodology used in this study, delimitations of the study, and definitions of key terms are outlined in this chapter.

A thorough review of relevant literature was provided in Chapter 2. This literature focused on areas which included: history of Farm Bureau and agricultural organizations, political interest groups, grassroots organizations, volunteer motivations, organizational leadership, social capital and agricultural leadership.

This chapter explains the methodology and data analysis used in this study. The objectives that were identified in this study were: (1) identify selected demographics of county Farm Bureau membership, (2) identify perceived leadership roles of county Farm Bureau leaders by the state Farm Bureau leadership, (3) measure the extent to which county Farm Bureau members practice the leadership expectations held by state Farm Bureau leaders and the level of importance they assign to those skills, (4) determine leadership attitude, will, and desire of active Florida Farm Bureau members, and (5) determine reason why local Farm Bureau members chose to participate or not participate in leadership roles in local county Farm Bureau boards.

In this chapter the research design used, the populations who participated in the study, the procedures used for data collection and the statistics used to analyze the data are described.

### **Research Design**

The research design of this study was a three-part assessment of the Florida Farm Bureau and its membership using both qualitative and quantitative research methods.

The three parts of this study included:

1. A qualitative long interview of members of the state leadership of the FFBF. This interview was the first part of the study and provided the foundation for the leadership competency instrument given to county Farm Bureau board members. Interview questions included their expectations of desired leadership practices and behaviors of local board members and their expectations of what county Farm Bureau boards should accomplish. The information provided in these interviews accomplished the second objective of this study.
2. A quantitative survey instrument was developed by the researcher, based upon findings from the qualitative interview and given to a random sample of members of local Farm Bureau boards. This instrument had a list of 66 leadership competencies, derived from the qualitative long interviews, which were divided into four sections and each respondent rated their perceived importance and proficiency of each. This instrument was used to accomplish the third objective of this study.
3. A quantitative leadership behavior instrument developed by the researcher and administered to active Farm Bureau members. This instrument measured respondent attitude/will/desire regarding leadership to determine if leadership apathy exists. Objectives four and five were accomplished by this instrument.

A demographic section was included at the end of both quantitative instruments to collect personal information about survey respondents. This information was used to accomplish the first objective of this study.

Quantitative research uses objective measurement and numerical analysis of data to explain the causes of changes in social phenomena. Qualitative research, seeks to understand a social phenomenon through the researcher's total immersion in the situation.

Quantitative research seeks to explain, while qualitative research is more concerned with understanding (Ary, Jacobs, and Razavieh, 1996).

Denzin and Lincoln (1994) offer a generic definition of qualitative research as multimethod in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. Qualitative researchers study subjects in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to them. It involves the studies use and collection of a variety of empirical materials—case study, personal experience, introspective, life stories, interviews, observational, historical, interactional, and visual texts that describe routine and problematic moments and meanings in individuals' lives.

Qualitative research does not have a distinct set of methods that are entirely its own. Researchers in this field use semiotics, narrative, content, discourse, archival, and phonemic analysis, and even statistics (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). In reporting qualitative data, one includes conceptual and theoretical framework, purpose and questions, research methodologies, findings, and a discussion section (Rudd, 1998). Qualitative studies seek to answer questions that stress how social experience is created and given meaning (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994).

Ary et al., (1996) state that both qualitative and quantitative research aim at a type of scientific explanation that includes the discovery of and appeal to laws—laws that govern the behavior of the physical world and human behavior. Rudd (1998) describes the attributes of qualitative research as providing a deep understanding of what is being researched, generating a deeper understanding of the phenomena, and providing another perspective for research. In qualitative research, researchers seek to interpret human

actions, institutions, events, and customs and in doing so, they construct a “reading” or portrayal of what is being studied. The ultimate goal is to portray the complex pattern of what is being studied in sufficient depth and detail so that one who has not experienced it can understand it (Ary et al., 1996).

Survey research can be classified as quantitative research in which instruments such as questionnaires are used to gather information from groups of subjects. Surveys are used to measure attitudes and opinions of respondents and are widely used in the social sciences (Ary et al., 1996). Regardless of whether a survey is qualitative or quantitative, it must be reliable (consistent) and valid (accurate) to ensure the accuracy and truthfulness of the findings.

Ary et al., (1996) describe validity as the extent to which an instrument measures what it is intended to measure. Reliability is the extent to which a measuring device is consistent in measuring whatever it measures. Vogt (1999) defines validity as a term used to describe a measurement instrument or test that accurately measures what it is suppose to measure. Reliability is defined as the freedom from measurement or random error. For qualitative data, the measurement instrument is said to be reliable when repeated measures of the same thing give identical or similar results. This reliability can be measured for the quantitative data using statistical software packages.

A long interview made up the first phase of the study. Long interviews are a more formal, orderly interview process that the researcher can direct to a range of intentions (Glesne, 1999). Researchers ask questions in the context of purposes generally known only to themselves, while the respondents, who possess the information the researchers are seeking, answer the questions in the context of dispositions (motives,

values, concerns, needs) that the researchers need to unravel to clarify the words that their questions generated. Long interviews can be the basis for later data collection (which is the case for this research project) as in the form of a questionnaire, which is the next step outlined in this process (Glesne, 1999).

Long interviews were chosen as they yield a high percentage of returns, as people are willing to cooperate with the research agenda. Information derived from interviews is likely to be correct than data obtained by other sources as the interviewer can clear up inaccurate answers by explaining the questions more thoroughly (Miller, 1991). This method is also advantageous as the researcher can chose and control those who answers the questions, important in this study as the state Farm Bureau organization initiated this needs assessment, so it is important to obtain the ideas and thoughts of the state leadership of this organization.

The qualitative interviews of the state Farm Bureau leadership underwent content analysis to provide the information used in the qualitative instrument given to county board members. Interviewing can be used to produce data for academic analysis and for the purpose of measurement or for understanding of an individual or group perspective. It is used as an attempt to understand the complex behavior of individuals without imposing any categorization that may limit the field of inquiry (Fontana & Frey, 1994). Keppel and Zedeck (1989) describe content analysis as an examination of spoken or written material for the purpose of classifying or coding of the information. Content analysis is a quantitatively oriented technique by which standardized measurements are used to characterize and compare documents (Manning & Cullum-Swan, 1994).

There were several steps in the content analysis of these interview questionnaires. The first step was the complete transcription of the seven interviews. The responses for each question were then grouped together. From the groups of responses for each question, four themes emerged. Responses were then grouped into these four theme areas and from there, the duplicate responses were eliminated. From the remaining responses in each area, the competencies were derived from the responses for the county board member instrument.

The quantitative portion of this study utilized survey research methods, with the first part a questionnaire developed from the responses of the long interviews and administered to county Farm Bureau board members. An additional leadership behavior instrument was developed to examine leadership attitude/will/desire within members. This instrument was administered to a sample of active Florida Farm Bureau members.

Ary et al., (1996) describe a survey as a research technique in which data are gathered by asking questions of a group of individuals called respondents. Survey research asks questions about the nature, incidence, or distribution of variables and/or the relationships among those variables. No manipulation is attempted on the variables, only descriptions of variables and their relationships as they naturally occur.

All three survey instruments used in this study were pilot tested to ensure validity. Pilot tests are a form of pre-testing in which subjects from the sample population are given the instrument and provide feedback to determine if the instrument is measuring what it is suppose to measure (Black, 1999). Members of the pilot test groups were taken from the same as the groups who would be receiving the three individual instruments.

Findings of this study determined what Farm Bureau is doing and what it needs to do to make local board members more effective in their county Farm Bureau's and also in their communities. The findings will be used as the state Farm Bureau organization is interested in developing a leadership program for its members, especially those serving on the local county boards. Results of this study will provide the state organization with the information needed to develop programs tailored to the needs of members.

### **Research Context**

This study took place in several locations and covered a five-month period, from January 2004 to May 2004. The development of the interview schedule occurred in early January and was completed early February 2004. The survey instrument developed from these interviews was pilot tested in March, then sent out to all local board members at the end of March 2004. The third and final part of this study, the leadership behavior instrument was developed and pilot tested in March 2004 and then was mailed to a sample of Florida Farm Bureau active members in late March 2004 with the responses collected until the middle of May 2004.

### **Research Participants**

For this study, one population, the Florida Farm Bureau organization, was used. Three subsets of this population were included in this population. The first subset was the leadership of the FFBF, which included: the president of the board of directors, administrative and legal counsel, director of the agricultural policy division, director of public relations, the vice president of the board of directors, the coordinator of national affairs, and the executive director of the Dade County Farm Bureau. These individuals participated in the first part of this study, individual interviews using a long interview

format. These interviews asked the organizational leaders to explain what they expect from county board members and what they want these board members and county boards to accomplish.

The second subset of the population was composed of members of local county Farm Bureau boards. A sample of this sub-population completed the survey derived from the state leader responses to the interview questionnaires. This portion of the study determined existing board member leadership behavior. Salant and Dillman (1994) describe how a sample size is chosen. There are approximately 666 county Farm Bureau board members in Florida (FFBF, 2004). Using a table provided by Salant and Dillman (1994), the researcher chose a 50/50 split with a  $\pm 5\%$  sampling error, a sample of 279 individuals was chosen (p. 55). The researcher was given the names and addresses of all county board members and randomly chose 279 participants to receive the survey. They were chosen through a process of systematic sampling, with the first element in the sample chosen from a random numbers table. After that number was chosen, every other individual on the list was included in the survey.

The third subset of the population was a sample of active Florida Farm Bureau members. The researcher was given a computer generated random list of active members and mailed surveys to 419 of these members. In this study, one of the subsets of the population was the active members of Florida Farm Bureau. The size of this subset is 36,100 (P. Cockrell, personal communication, September 10, 2002). Using a 50/50 split with a  $\pm 5\%$  sampling error, 419 members of this subpopulation were selected to participate in this part of the study.

The basic survey procedure outlined in Salant and Dillman (1994) was used for the data collection of the two subset populations of board members and active members. This survey procedure is comprised of four separate mailings. The first is a personalized, advance notice letter, which is mailed to all members of the sample. This letter explained to the individuals that they were selected for the survey and that they will be receiving a questionnaire. The second mailing was mailed a week later. It included a personalized cover letter, which explained the survey, their rights as survey subjects, a survey instrument, and a stamped return envelope. Exactly six days after the second mailing, a postcard was sent to each participant thanking those who had sent back their survey and requesting a response from those who had not yet responded. Three weeks after the second mailing a third mailing was sent out to all those who had not responded. It included a personalized letter again explaining the importance of their returning the survey, a replacement survey, and another stamped return envelope.

This procedure was used to produce an acceptable response rate so as to try to avoid nonresponse error. The response rate for the qualitative interview was 100%, 46% for county board members, and 25% for active members. As Ary, Jacobs, and Razavieh (1996) state “using information only from those who choose to respond can introduce error, because the respondents represent a self-selected group that may not represent the views of the entire sample or population” (p. 460). Research has shown that respondents differ from nonrespondents and the extent of this difference should be determined. For this study, early and late respondents were compared as late respondents are similar to those who do not respond at all (Ary, Jacobs, & Razavieh, 1996). Those who responded to the survey early (after the first survey was sent to them) were compared to those who

responded late (after the follow-up survey was sent). Differences were examined in the responses of these groups to determine if there were any significant differences between the responses, the differences examined include survey responses and demographic information. There were no significant differences found in the surveys of the early and late respondents, which indicates that it was an unbiased sample of recipients.

### **Instruments Used in Data Collection**

Three instruments were used in the data collection for this study. The first was an interview questionnaire found in Appendix C. This questionnaire was developed by the researcher and sought to determine the competencies and skills that were perceived by the leadership of the state Farm Bureau organization as necessary leadership attributes that local county board members should have to make them effective members of their county boards. These questions also were used to determine from the state leadership the perceived needs of the county boards, the perceived needs of the Farm Bureau organization, and the needs of Farm Bureau members. There were 16 questions used for this interview and based on interviews with Farm Bureau leadership and from a review of the literature.

This instrument was evaluated by a panel of experts for content and validity and pilot tested with a comparable group of leaders from two other state Farm Bureaus. These pilot tests were conducted over the telephone and lasted approximately one hour. The interviews were transcribed by the researcher and analyzed for content. Minor changes were made to the interview questionnaire from the results of the pilot test.

This questionnaire was administered by the researcher to leaders of the Florida Farm Bureau organization. Five of these interviews took place in person in the state

Farm Bureau headquarters in Gainesville, Florida and two took place by telephone, and all were recorded for later transcription. This transcription occurred soon after the interviews and themes were examined in the responses. Four themes emerged from these interviews and served as a basis for the instrument that was developed for county board members.

The second instrument was developed by the researcher from the responses of the long interviews. Respondents of this survey questionnaire (Appendix D) were local Farm Bureau county board members. This instrument was pilot tested with a group of county board members who were not included in the final sample. From the content analysis of the long interviews with state Farm Bureau officials, a list of 100 competencies were identified in four areas: leadership, political process, knowledge of Farm Bureau, and effective boards. Participants were asked to rate the importance of each competency to the success of a county board using a Likert scale ranging from 1 (low importance) to 7 (high importance). In addition, how proficient they felt they were, was also rated on a Likert scale ranging from 1 (low importance) to 7 (high importance). After pilot testing this instrument and analyzing the data, the list of competencies was reduced to 66 across the four construct areas. A conceptual model for this part of the study depicting the relationship between the competencies found in the first part of the study and what makes a successful board member is presented in Figure 3-1. This model represents that being a successful board member is a function of competencies in the four theme areas.

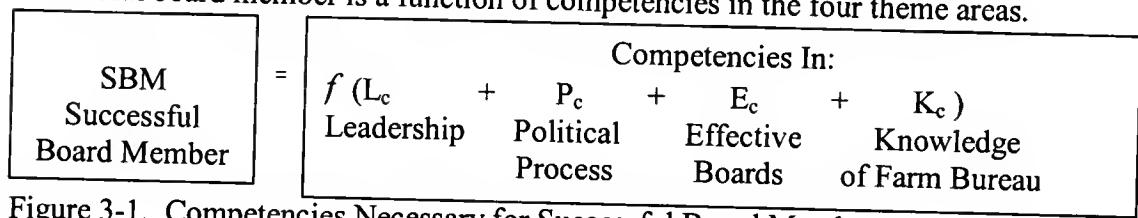


Figure 3-1. Competencies Necessary for Successful Board Members.

The third instrument (Appendix E) used in this study was a leadership behavior instrument which was composed of three parts: a motivation sources inventory, a semantic differential scale to measure volunteering attitudes, and a Likert scale inventory to assess respondents' desire about serving on a county board. The motivation sources inventory was developed by Barbuto and Scholl (1998) and measures the sources of motivation. The authors developed this inventory to predict behaviors of individuals and it was used in this context as a factor that contributes to members will to serve (or not to serve) on their county Farm Bureau boards.

Because county board members are volunteers, a semantic differential was constructed to obtain participants' attitudes on volunteering. Vogt (1999) defines a semantic differential scale as "a question format in an interview or survey in which respondents are asked to locate their attitudes on a scale ranging between opposite positions on a particular issue" (p. 261). This scale is a combination of scaling procedures and controlled association that provides the subject with a concept, in this case volunteering, to be differentiated and a set of bipolar adjectival scales against which to do it. The participant is asked to indicate for each item, the direction of their association and its intensity on a seven-step scale (Osgood, Suci, & Tannenbaum, 1971.) Twelve adjective pairs were used in the semantic differential used in this scale.

The third part of this instrument was a Likert scale, which measured participants' desire about serving on their local county Farm Bureau boards. This part of the researcher-developed instrument consisted of twelve statements which participants were asked to rate from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

From the literature, motivation factors, attitudes on volunteering and demographic variables have been identified as influences on participation in organizations and whether individuals will step forth for additional leadership responsibilities within these organizations. These contribute to the attitude/will/desire that was measured by this instrument in the third part of this study. A conceptual model which represents this part of the study is provided in Figure 3-2. In this model, leadership is a function of motivation factors, volunteering attitudes, a desire to serve and demographic variables.

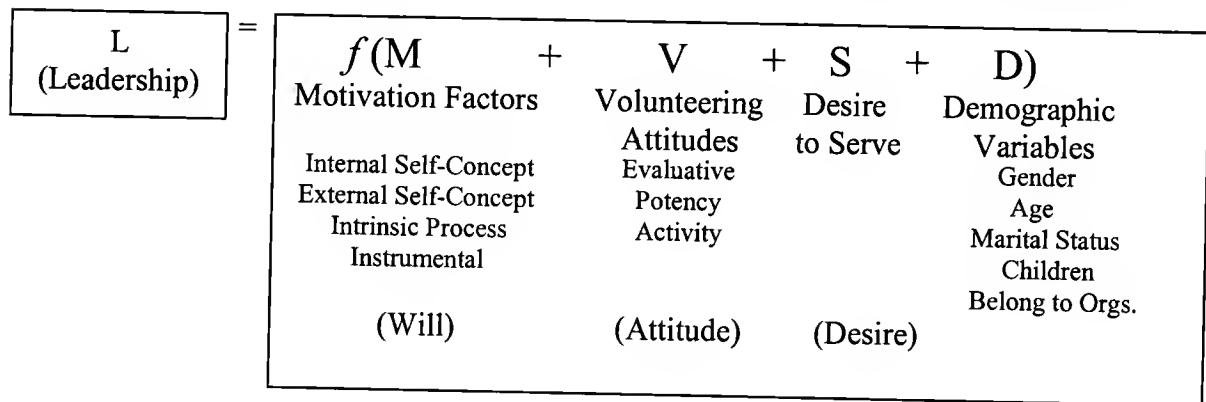


Figure 3-2. Factors which Influence Individuals Participation in Leadership Opportunities

#### Data Analysis

An informed consent letter for study participants and a proposal of this study was submitted to the University of Florida Institutional Review Board (IRB) for their review. The IRB approved the proposal for this study and the instruments that were used to collect data (Protocol #2003-U-992). A copy of the informed consent letter was signed by interviewees before they participated in the long interviews. For the other two participant groups, they were informed of their rights as research subjects in a letter they received explaining the survey and the importance of their participation. Data collection began once IRB approved this study.

Various methods of data collection and analyses were conducted in this study. Responses from the long interviews underwent content analysis. McCracken (1988) described the qualitative researcher's goal in long interviews is to isolate and define categories during the process of research. Patterns of interrelationships between categories are examined. Using the same interview questions for each respondent ensures that the investigator covers all the terrain in the same order for each respondent. The first step in this analysis was the transcription of the interview answers. The object of this analysis was to determine the relationships, categories and assumptions that inform the respondent's view of the world in general and the topic in particular (McCracken, 1988). The analysis conducted identified themes in the responses that were subsequently used in the development of the competencies used in the survey instrument given to local county board members. The information provided by this content analysis was used in objective two; identify perceived leadership roles of county Farm Bureau leaders by the state Farm Bureau leadership.

Data analysis of the two survey instruments was used to explain and predict leader involvement. The demographic information collected from both surveys was used to accomplish the first research objective, identify demographics of county Farm Bureau members. Independent variables, age, gender, years of membership in Farm Bureau, membership in other agricultural organizations, membership in other organizations, membership in leadership and youth development organizations, marital status, children, agricultural income and farm size was analyzed. Selected independent variables were used with other data as predictors of participation on county Farm Bureau boards.

The leadership competency instrument that was developed for county board members was used to accomplish objective three, measure the extent to which county Farm Bureau members practice the leadership expectations held by state Farm Bureau leaders and the level of importance they assign to those skills. This instrument was comprised of four competency sections: (1) 15 leadership, (2) 20 political process, (3) 15 effective boards, and (4) 16 knowledge of Farm Bureau. The mean and standard deviation was calculated for the importance and proficiency of each competency section.

Determine leadership attitude, will, and desire of active Florida Farm Bureau members was accomplished in objective four, by analyzing the data of each section of the instrument. A mean and standard deviation was found for the motivation sources inventory and the semantic differential. A reliability analysis was conducted on the Likert scale about perceptions of serving on county boards.

Multiple linear regression was used in the accomplishment of objective five, determine reason why local Farm Bureau members chose to participate or not participate in leadership roles in local county Farm Bureau boards. Vogt (1999) describes regression analysis as a predictor for whether something will happen or not, such as graduation, business failure, or in this case, participation on a county board. Regression is used to determine the nature of the relationship between a dependent variable and more than one independent variable (Black, 1999). For this analysis, the dependent variable is participation on a county board, and the independent variables are: the four motivation factors from the motivation sources inventory, the three factors about attitude on volunteering from the semantic differential, attitude about serving on a county board, and the following demographic variables: motivation internal self-concept factor, evaluative

volunteering factor, activity volunteering factor, belonging to other organizations, children, member of 4-H, member of other youth development organizations, participation in leadership development programs, and agricultural income from livestock.

### **Summary**

This chapter explained the research methods that were used in this research design conducted for the FFBF. This study was conducted in three-parts, which included: long interviews, a leadership instrument developed from these interviews, and a leadership behavior instrument developed to measure leadership attitude/will/desire. Demographic information was also collected from individuals which was used to in the data analysis. Results of these methods will be presented in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER 4 RESULTS

This study examined the need for individuals to step forward and assume leadership positions within a changing agricultural industry. The purpose of this study was to examine the leadership expectations and perceptions of Florida Farm Bureau members.

Chapter one provided the background to this study, the problem statement, and significance of this study, definitions of key terms and several limitations to the study. The objectives of the study were: (1) identify demographics of county Farm Bureau membership, (2) identify perceived leadership roles of county Farm Bureau leaders by the state Farm Bureau leadership, (3) measure the extent to which county Farm Bureau members practice the leadership expectations held by state Farm Bureau leaders, (4) determine leadership attitude, will, and desire of active Florida Farm Bureau members, and (5) determine reason why local Farm Bureau members chose to participate or not participate in leadership roles in local county Farm Bureau boards.

The theoretical and conceptual framework for this study was found in Chapter two. This framework focused on research in seven areas: the history of the Farm Bureau and other agricultural organizations, political interest groups, grassroots organizations, organizational leadership, motivations of volunteers, social capital and agricultural leadership.

The research methodology used in this study was described in Chapter three. The research design, research participants, instruments used in data collection and data analysis procedures were described.

This chapter will present the findings of the study, which are organized in order of the research objectives.

### **Objective One** **Identify Demographics of County Farm Bureau Membership**

Results from the demographic information section found at the end of each of the quantitative instruments (Appendices D-E) are reported separately for the two groups due to differences found between the demographic variables of active members and county board members. Please note the change in population number (*n*) for each table. Several respondents in both groups did not fill out portions of the demographic information sections found in both instruments. The total number of board members who responded to the survey was 129 (46%) and the total number of active members was 104 (25%).

Table 4-1 provides information on gender, marital status and children of participants in both groups. Of the 129 board members who responded to this survey, 88.4% (*n*=114) were male and 11.6% (*n*=15) were female. For the active survey, of the 100 who completed this demographic variable, 69% (*n*=69) were male and 31% (*n*=31) were female. According to the *2002 Census of Agriculture*, 11% of principal operators on farms were women, while 89% were men (USDA, 2004). Those numbers reflect the county board members who responded to the survey.

Married board members made up 86% (*n*=111) of the board member population. Single board members accounted for 14% (*n*=18) of the population. Of the active members who participated in the study, 68.3% (*n*=69) were married.

Large percentages of both groups had children, 93.8% ( $n=121$ ) for board members and 84.2% ( $n=85$ ) for active members. When combined, 90% ( $n=206$ ) of respondents to both surveys had children.

Table 4-1 Demographic Variables for Gender, Marital Status, & Children of Active and Board Members (N=233)

	Board (N=129)		Active (N=104)		Total (N=233)	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Male	114	88.4	69	69	183	80
Female	15	11.6	31	31	46	20
Married	111	86	69	68.3	180	78
Single	18	14	32	31.7	50	22
Children	121	93.8	85	84.2	206	90
No Children	8	6.2	16	15.8	24	10

Note: Missing variables (Active = 4)

Those who serve on Farm Bureau boards have been a Farm Bureau member for an average of 21.4 years. The average number of years in Farm Bureau for active members who completed this survey was 14.5 years. Years of membership in Farm Bureau can be found in Table 4-2.

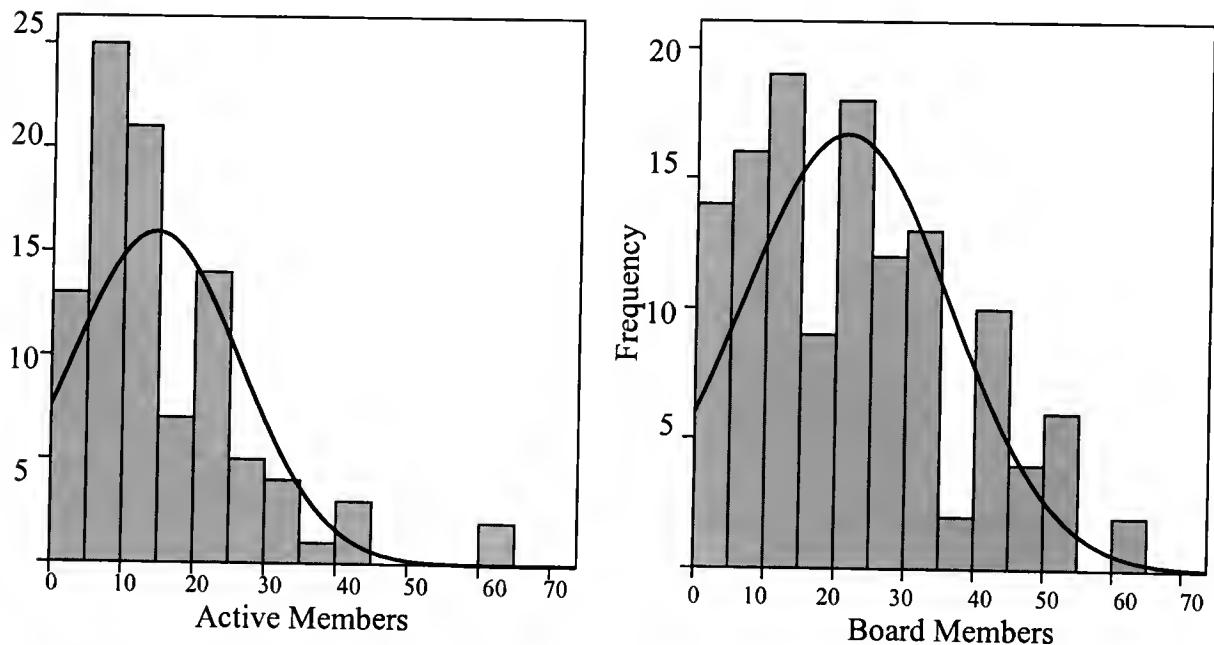
Table 4-2 Years of Membership in Farm Bureau for Active and Board Members (N=220)

	Board (n=125)	Active (n=95)
Mean	21.4	14.5
Minimum	1	.30
Maximum	62	64
Member for 0-10 years	%	%
Member for 11 to 25 years	33.6	50.5
Member for 26 to 64 years	33.6	37.9
	32.8	11.6

Note: Missing variables (Board = 4; Active = 9)

Board members who have belonged to Farm Bureau for zero to ten years is 33.6% ( $n=42$ ), while 50.5% ( $n=48$ ) of active members have belonged to Farm Bureau for this time range. Those who have been a member for 11 to 25 years are 33.6% ( $n=42$ ) for

board members and 37.9% ( $n=36$ ) for active members. The third range of membership, 26 to 64 years, has 32.8% ( $n=41$ ) of board members and 11.6% ( $n=11$ ) of active members. A graphic representation for years of membership in Farm Bureau for both groups can be found in Figure 4-1.



**Figure 4-1.** Comparisons of Years of Membership in Farm Bureau (Active N=95, M=14.50, SD=11.90; Board N=125, M=21.38, SD=14.94)

Family involvement in Farm Bureau was also examined with 73.4% ( $n=91$ ) of board members indicating that they were part of another generation of Farm Bureau as their family had been involved in Farm Bureau, while only 17% ( $n=17$ ) of active members indicated that their family was involved in Farm Bureau. Table 4-3 represents the involvement of family in Farm Bureau and demonstrates that board members have a much greater percentage of family who have been involved in Farm Bureau than active members.

Table 4-3 Family Involved in Farm Bureau for Active and Board Members (N=224)

	Board (n=124) %	Active (n=100) %
<b>Family Involved</b>		
Yes	73.4	17.0
No	26.6	83
<b>Family Involved in FB from 0 to 25 Years</b>	56.2	92.8
<b>Family Involved in FB from 26 to 50 Years</b>	40	5.1
<b>Family Involved in FB from 51 to 80 Years</b>	3.8	2.1

Note: Missing variables (Board = 5; Active = 4)

On average, Farm Bureau board members spend 8.4 hours per month on Farm Bureau activities, which includes participating in meetings, activities, events and conventions and reading information in support of these activities. Active members spend considerably less time than board members, only a quarter of an hour per month on average. Farm Bureau board members attended, on average, 11.7 Farm Bureau events in the past year, while active members only attended an average of 0.3 events for the past year. Table 4-4 represents the time devoted and events attended for both groups.

Table 4-4 Time Devoted to Farm Bureau for Active and Board Members (N=215)

	Board (n=123)	Active (n=92)
<b>Mean Number of Hours Per Month</b>	8.4	0.4
<b>Minimum Number of Hours Per Month</b>	0	0
<b>Maximum Number of Hours Per Month</b>	82	8
<b>Mean Number of FB Events Attended Last Year</b>	11.7	0.3
<b>Minimum Number of FB Events Attended Last Year</b>	2	0
<b>Maximum Number of FB Events Attended Last Years</b>	40	6

Note: Missing variables (Board = 6; Active = 12)

There were several demographic questions that were only asked of county board members. These questions reflected their length of time on their county board, if they had been president of their county Farm Bureau board and if they had been on the Florida Farm Bureau Federation board. Table 4-5 represents the first of these questions for board

members, the length of time (in years) they have served on their county boards. County board members have served an average of 11.5 years on their county boards. This table shows that over 60% of county board members have been on their boards for up to ten years, while over 14% have been on their board for longer than twenty years.

Table 4-5 Length of Time (in years) on Farm Bureau Board (N=126)

	Board (n=126)	
	n	%
Mean	11.5	
Minimum	0.5	
Maximum	54	
0.5 to 5 Years	53	42.1
6 to 10 Years	25	19.8
11 to 15 Years	18	14.3
16 to 20 Years	12	9.5
20 and More Years	18	14.3

Note: Missing variables (Board = 3)

One-third of county board members have served as president of their county Farm Bureau board 33.6% (n=43) and less than 10% (n=10) have served on the Florida Farm Bureau Federation Board. Table 4-6 reflects those that have served in these higher capacities.

Table 4-6 Board Members Who Have Served as President of County Farm Bureau Board and/or on the Florida Farm Bureau Federation Board(N=128)

	No		Yes	
	n	%	n	%
Served as County President	85	66.4	43	33.6
Served on Florida Farm Bureau Federation Board	118	92.2	10	7.8

Note: Missing variables (Board = 1)

Many organizations represent components of agriculture and Table 4-7 shows the involvement of both board and active members in other agricultural organizations. Board members seem to be more active in other organizations 71.4% (n=90) than do active members 10% (n=10). For those that are involved, board members belong to an average

of 1.9 other agricultural organizations, while active members belong to an average of 0.5 agricultural organizations. Board members belong to a greater number of organizations as well, as the maximum number was 11 with a maximum of only 5 for active members. Of those board members who were involved in other agricultural organizations, 42.1% ( $n=53$ ) held leadership roles in these organizations, while only 4% ( $n=4$ ) of active members held leadership positions in other agricultural organizations.

Table 4-7 Involvement with other Agricultural Organizations for Active and Board Members (N=226)

	Board (n=126)		Active (n=100)	
	n	%	n	%
Involvement with Other Ag. Organizations				
Yes	90	71.4	10	10
No	36	28.6	90	90
Leadership Role in Agricultural Organizations				
Yes	53	42.1	4	4
No	73	57.9	96	96
Mean Number of Agricultural Organizations		1.9		.5
Minimum Number of Agricultural Organizations		1		1
Maximum Number of Agricultural Organizations		11		5

Note: Missing variables (Board = 3; Active = 4)

Individuals are also involved in other civic, community, and business organizations and Table 4-8 represents the level of involvement by board and active members. Both groups are involved with other organizations, 63.8% ( $n=81$ ) of board members and 42.6% ( $n=43$ ) of active members are involved in at least one civic, community or business organization. On average, active members belonged to 0.9 additional organizations, while board members belonged to 1.9 additional organizations. Of the over one-third of board members who did belong to additional organizations, 37%

( $n=47$ ) held leadership roles in these organizations, while 18.8% ( $n=19$ ) of active members held leadership positions in civic, community, and business organizations.

Table 4-8 Involvement with other Organizations (N=228)

	Board (n=127)		Active (n=101)	
	n	%	n	%
Yes	81	63.8	43	42.6
No	45	35.4	58	57.4
<b>Leadership Role in Organizations</b>				
Yes	47	37	19	18.8
No	80	63	82	81.2
<b>Mean Number of Organizations</b>				
		1.9		0.9
<b>Minimum Number of Organizations</b>				
		1		1
<b>Maximum Number of Organizations</b>				
		8		6

Note: Missing variables (Board = 2; Active = 3)

Slightly over half of the board members 53.5% ( $n=68$ ) were currently serving on the board of other organizations, while only 16% ( $n=16$ ) of active members were on the boards of other organizations. The mean number of additional boards that county Farm Bureau board members were serving on was 1.1 boards, while the number for active members was 0.3. These figures are represented by Table 4-9.

Table 4-9 Active and Board Members Currently Serving on Boards of other Organizations (N=227)

	Board (n=127)		Active (n=100)	
	n	%	n	%
Yes	68	53.5	16	16
No	59	46.5	84	84
<b>Mean Number of Boards</b>				
		1.1		0.3
<b>Minimum Number of Boards</b>				
		1		1
<b>Maximum Number of Boards</b>				
		7		5

Note: Missing variables (Board = 2; Active = 4)

The age characteristics of board and active members can be found on Table 4-10.

The mean ages for both groups are approximately equivalent, 51.4 years for board

members and 50.9 years for active members. A graphic representation of the distributions of ages for both groups is presented in Figure 4-2. Close to fifty percent of active members, 48.5% ( $n=33$ ) are between 43 to 60 years old, while 33% ( $n=36$ ) of board members fall within this age range. A graphic representation of the distributions of ages for both groups is presented in Figure 4-2.

Table 4-10 Age of Active and Board Members (N=177)

	Board (n = 109)	Active (n = 68)
Mean Age	51.4	50.9
Minimum Age	21	19
Maximum Age	83	87
19 to 42 Years Old	36	19
43 to 60 Years Old	36	33
61 to 87 Years Old	37	16

Note: Missing variables (Board = 20; Active = 36)

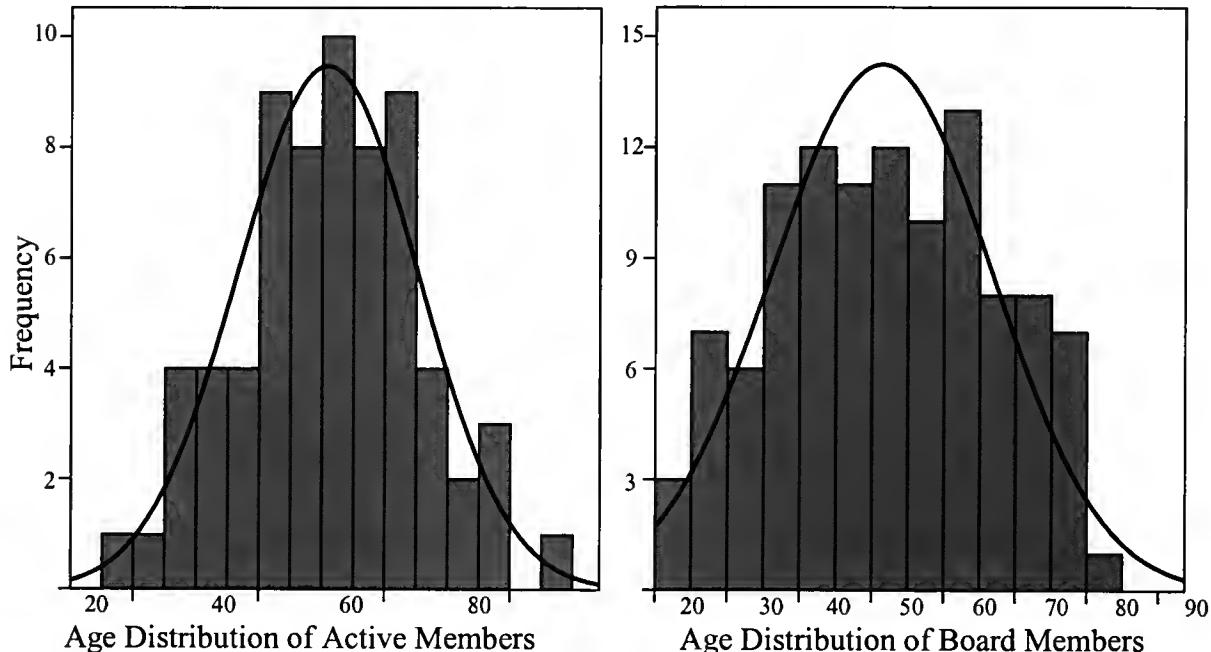


Figure 4-2. Age Distributions of Active and Board Members (Active N=68, M=50.90, SD=14.32; Board N=109, M=51.40, SD=15.26)

Questions in reference to the respondents' participation in youth and leadership development organizations were found in the demographic portion of both questionnaires. Results of these questions can be found in Table 4-11. There were 55, (42.6%) board members who belonged to 4-H, while 21.8% ( $n=22$ ) of active members were involved in the 4-H program. Almost half, 45.7% ( $n=59$ ) of board members belonged to FFA, while only 12.9% ( $n=13$ ) of active members belonged to this organization. Approximately the same percentage of each group, 34.6% ( $n=44$ ) of board members and 34.7% ( $n=35$ ) of active members, belonged to other youth development organizations. One-quarter of board members 24.4% ( $n=31$ ) and 15.8% ( $n=16$ ) of active members have participated in leadership development programs.

Table 4-11 Membership in Youth and Leadership Development Programs for Active and Board Members (N=230)

	Board (n = 129)		Active (n = 101)	
	n	%	n	%
<b>Member of 4-H</b>				
Yes	55	42.6	22	21.8
No	74	57.4	79	78.2
<b>Member of FFA</b>				
Yes	59	45.7	13	12.9
No	70	54.3	88	87.1
<b>Member in other Youth Development Organizations</b>				
Yes	44	34.6	35	34.7
No	85	65.4	66	65.3
<b>Participant in Leadership Development Programs</b>				
Yes	31	24.4	16	15.8
No	98	75.6	85	84.2

Note: Missing variables (Active = 3)

Income derived from livestock accounted for the largest percentage of agricultural income for both groups, 43% for board members and 12.5% for active members.

Agricultural income can be found in Table 4-12. Income from forestry represents the second largest percentage for board members 25% and is equivalent to the percentage of active members who are involved with livestock, 12.5%. The category of "other" represents the third largest percentage for each group, with 14% of board members and 8.9% of active members deriving their income from this category. There are twelve other categories found on this table with their corresponding percentages. It should be noted that a majority of respondents indicated that they derived their agricultural income from more than one category, which accounts for the reason why the *n* in each category will not equal to total number of respondents when summated.

**Table 4-12 Agricultural Income for Active and Board Members (N=185)**

	Board (n =129)		Active (n =56)	
	n	%	n	%
Livestock	56	43	7	12.5
Forestry	32	25	7	12.5
Other (Hay, Sod, Chemicals, Ag Sales, Etc.)	21	16	5	8.9
Citrus	18	14	3	5.4
Horticulture	16	12	2	3.6
Vegetables	15	12	3	5.4
Peanuts	14	11	0	0
Grain	11	9	1	1.8
Fruit	10	8	2	3.6
Equine	9	7	5	8.9
Dairy	5	4	2	3.6
Aquaculture	4	3	1	1.8
Poultry	3	2	1	1.8
Tobacco	2	2	0	0
Sugarcane	0	0	2	3.6

Note: Missing variables (Active = 48)

The average size of a board members farm was 1,778.1 acres while the average farm of an active member was 398.1 acres. The range of farm size was approximately the same for both groups, 0 to 28,000 acres for board members and 0 to 20,000 acres for active members. Almost three-quarters of active members 72.4% (*n*=42) have farms,

which range in size from 0 to 10 acres, while 13.3% ( $n=15$ ) of board members have farms this size. A small number of board members 5.3% ( $n=6$ ) and 1.7% ( $n=1$ ) of active members had farms, which accounted for the upper size range, 10001 to 28000 acres in size. Farm size in acres can be found in Table 4-13.

Table 4-13 Farm Size in Acres for Active and Board Members (N=171)

	Board ( $n=113$ )	Active ( $n=58$ )		
Mean Size	1,778.1			
Median Size	300			
Minimum Size	0			
Maximum Size	28,000			
	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
0 to 10 acres	15	13.3	42	72.4
11 to 100 acres	26	23	10	17.3
101 to 500 acres	30	26.5	3	5.1
501 to 1000 acres	14	12.4	2	3.5
1001 to 10000 acres	22	19.5	0	0
10001 to 28000 acres	6	5.3	1	1.7

Note: Missing variables (Board = 16; Active = 46)

Less than half of the board members work off farm 44.2% ( $n=57$ ), while 65.1% ( $n=56$ ) of active members are employed off the farm. Table 4-14 provides information on this demographic variable.

Table 4-14 Active and County Board Members who Work Off Farm (N=215)

	Board ( $n=129$ )	Active ( $n=86$ )		
	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
Yes	57	44.2	56	65.1
No	72	55.8	30	34.9

Note: Missing variables (Active=18)

### Summary of Objective One

The majority of county board members and active members were married men with children. County board members tended to be members of the FFBF longer than active members and they had more family who were involved in Farm Bureau than active

members. One third of county board members have been president of their county board while less than ten percent have been on the FFBF board. County board members are more active in other agricultural organizations and also business, community and civic organizations. Both active and county board members have approximately the same mean age of 50 years. A greater number of county board members belonged to 4-H, FFA, and have participated in other leadership development programs. County board members have a greater average farm size then do active members and less work off farm.

**Objective Two**  
**Identify Perceived Leadership Roles of County Farm Bureau Leaders by the State Farm Bureau Leadership**

State leadership of the Florida Farm Bureau Federation were given a researcher-developed qualitative interview questionnaire (Appendix C) in order to determine their expectations of county Farm Bureau board members and county Farm Bureau boards. From their responses, a list of 100 competencies in four theme areas was developed, and after pilot testing, 66 competencies remained and composed the instrument that was given to county board members. Competencies were eliminated if they were repetitive, confusing, or were not statistically significant.

The responses from the long interviews underwent content analysis and four major theme areas emerged from the analysis of the interview transcripts and audiotapes. These areas were: leadership, political process, effective boards, and knowledge of Farm Bureau. These were all areas that the state leadership determined county Farm Bureau board members should possess skills in. Questions on the interview questionnaire were not separated into these four areas, but the responses given by interview participants were

easily categorized into these four theme areas. It should be noted that the results in this section are reported as percentage of respondents who stated that specific competency was important. It would be assumed that all respondents would feel each are important for an “ideal” board member, but a specific competency may not have been explicitly stated by each and every board member.

## **Leadership**

The competencies found in the leadership theme area included skills related to how to conduct meetings, effective communication practices, and identifying potential leaders and leadership abilities. A complete list of competencies that were developed from the responses in this area can be found in Table 4-15.

As one participant stated “we need folks who have the desire to lead so the torch can be passed on.” All respondents felt that county board members needed to already be leaders and possess some leadership skill(s). Not only do they need to possess leadership abilities, county board members need to choose to be involved in leadership opportunities such as serving on their county Farm Bureau board. The county boards need individuals who are willing to step forward and assume leadership roles within the organization.

Several competencies were deemed highly important in the leadership area by the interview respondents, these included: choose individuals to serve the organizations who are respected in their communities, choose individuals to serve who are recognized as leaders by their peers, demonstrate ability to work in small group settings, demonstrate ability to build consensus within a group, and recognize how committees are utilized in the Farm Bureau organization.

Table 4-15 Leadership Competencies Derived from Interviews with Florida Farm Bureau Officials (N=7)

Recognize leadership opportunities.
Choose to be involved in leadership opportunities.
Demonstrate success in leadership capacities.
Identify potential leaders.
Encourage potential leaders to become involved.
Recognize different types of leadership.
Recognize different leadership styles.
Recognize personality differences (as indicated by personality tests such as the Myers Briggs.)
Choose individuals to serve the organization who are respected in their communities.
Choose individuals to serve who are recognized as leaders by their peers.
Demonstrate ability to conduct an orderly meeting.
Demonstrate knowledge of the use of goals and objectives in an organization.
Demonstrate ability to work in small group settings.
Demonstrate ability to build consensus within a group.
Demonstrate ability to use conflict resolution practices.
Identify proactive solutions.
Practice progressiveness (not do things the way they have always been done).
Demonstrate ability to use email and the internet.
Recognize the importance of being involved in Farm Bureau committees.
Recognize how committees are utilized in the Farm Bureau organization.
Use effective communication skills in public speaking.
Use effective communication skills in media interviews.
Use effective communication skills in working with groups.
Use effective communication skills in writing letters.

Respondents also indicated that county board members need to have the necessary skills to be an effective board member. These skills included: ability to work in a group and achieve consensus, the basic understanding of how to run an orderly meeting, and communication competencies in how to speak to the media and groups. The importance of board members being able to recognize different personality types and leadership styles as this would allow board members to better understand each other and work effectively together were also found important. Conflict resolution and the ability to achieve consensus in a group were identified by the participants as important abilities for board members to have. Respondents also indicated that board members should have

communication skills which include: speaking to groups and the media, writing letters, and being comfortable with the use of technology such as email and the internet.

Respondents indicated the need for county board members to be proactive and the ability to seek out alternatives to problems. As indicated in the interviews, “we need board members who bring new things to the table, who don’t do things the way they have always been done.” One of the concerns of the state leaders is that older board members are inhibiting younger board members from implementing new ideas as they are not comfortable with change, or doing things differently from the way they have always been done.

### **Political Process**

As one Farm Bureau official stated “Farm Bureau is a mechanism for people to work collectively together on political, social, and economic ideas.” Another stated “the strongest county Farm Bureaus are affecting political leaders.” All interview respondents felt that one of the objectives of county Farm Bureaus and county Farm Bureau members should be involvement in the political process. This involvement included the abilities to: explain agricultural issues, demonstrate ability to become involved in government on the local, state, and national level, demonstrate knowledge of the political process and political structure on all levels, develop relationships with elected officials and support the legislative activities of the Farm Bureau. A complete list of political process competencies can be found in Table 4-16.

Table 4-16 Political Process Competencies Derived from Interviews with Florida Farm Bureau Officials (N=7)

Analyze agricultural issues on the county level.
Explain agricultural issues on the county level.
Analyze agricultural issues on the state level.
Explain agricultural issues on the state level.
Analyze agricultural issues on the national level.
Explain agricultural issues on the national level.
Develop relationships with local government.
Demonstrate ability to be involved in local government.
Analyze policy development on issues that affect Farm Bureau on the county level.
Analyze policy development on issues that affect Farm Bureau on the state level.
Analyze policy development on issues that affect Farm Bureau on the national level.
Demonstrate ability to formulate policy.
Demonstrate ability to revise policy.
Demonstrate knowledge of the political process.
Choose ways to be more politically active.
Identify the political structure in Tallahassee.
Identify the political structure in Washington, D.C.
Determine how policy decisions made in Tallahassee impact Farm Bureau.
Determine how policy decisions made in Washington, D.C. impact Farm Bureau.
Develop relationships with elected officials on the county level.
Develop relationships with staff to elected officials on the county level.
Develop relationships with elected officials on the state level.
Develop relationships with staff to elected officials on the state level.
Develop relationships with elected officials on the national level.
Develop relationships with staff to elected officials on the national level.
Develop Farm Bureau legislative activities.
Support Farm Bureau legislative activities.
Recognize regulatory agencies.
Demonstrate involvement with regulatory agencies.
Participate in county government meetings impacting agriculture.
Participate in state government meetings impacting agriculture.
Participate in national government meetings that are impacting agriculture.

Respondents felt that county board members needed the following skills or competencies: analyze policy development issues that affect Farm Bureau on all levels, choose ways to be more politically active, determine how policy decisions affect Farm Bureau, support Farm Bureau legislative activities and participate in government meetings that are impacting agriculture.

Respondents specifically indicated that developing relationships with government officials was an important competency for county board members. They also believed that board members needed to possess the necessary skills to analyze and explain agricultural issues on all levels, especially those on the local and state level.

Policy development was a priority of Farm Bureau and that county board members needed to be familiar and comfortable with the policy development process. The competencies in this theme were all derived from these responses. As one respondent stated ‘Farm Bureau’s advantage is that they have a ‘presence in each county,’ which gives incredible potential with policy issues and committee issues.”

Farm Bureau officials who were interviewed felt that county board members needed to know how politics and the political process worked on the local, state, and national level. This included the political structures of Tallahassee, FL and Washington, D.C.

Becoming politically active in the policy development process is the overriding theme of this section. All respondents stressed the importance that county board members be involved in policy development on some level and understand how the process works.

### **Effective Boards**

Being an effective board member was another overriding theme in the interview responses. Respondents indicated that board members needed to participate in Farm Bureau programs and meetings, support the organization and it’s leaders, and demonstrate the ability to work together to benefit the organization. A list of effective board competencies can be found in Table 4-17.

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Table 4-17 Effective Board Competencies Derived from Interviews with Florida Farm Bureau Officials (N=7)

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Participate in Farm Bureau sponsored programs.
Acquire additional responsibilities within Farm Bureau.
Determine individuals' strengths.
Provide activities to utilize those strengths.
Demonstrate interest in serving on the county Farm Bureau board.
Employ mutual respect for all board members.
Demonstrate enjoyment in working together to accomplish goals.
Demonstrate ability to work together to develop a vision of where the organization should be.
Demonstrate ability to work together to develop the goals necessary to achieve vision.
Support the organization.
Support the county president.
Support board decisions.
Attend board meetings.
Pay attention to proceedings at meetings.
Evaluate materials involving issues.
Up-hold the bylaws of the organization.
Interpret financial aspects of the county board.
Propose ideas and solutions on issues.
Demonstrate a background in agriculture.
Demonstrate civic involvement.
Identify with the business structure in the community.
Represent Farm Bureau to others in the community.
Demonstrate ability to work together for the benefit of the whole Farm Bureau organization.
Demonstrate ability to work together to solve problems.
<u>Encourage individuals involved in agriculture to become members of Farm Bureau.</u>

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Specific abilities in regards to effective boards and effective board meetings were mentioned by respondents: demonstrate the ability in working together to accomplish goals, demonstrate ability to work together to develop a vision of where the organizations should be, support the organization, support the county president, support board decisions, attend board meetings, pay attention to proceedings, evaluate materials, and up-hold the bylaws of the organization. Those interviewed stated that it was important for county board members to identify with the business structure in their communities.

Farm Bureau officials indicated that the first board meeting a newly elected board member attends is their first, so board members may need training on how to be an effective member. Board members needed to act collectively as a board, not as a group of individual board members and support the board's president and the decisions of the board, even if they did not agree with them. All respondents indicated the importance of working together to solve problems for the benefit of Farm Bureau and its members. As one respondent stated, "these boards are volunteer organizations, members need to transcend competitive enterprise to solve problems together and work together for the benefit of the whole organization.

### **Knowledge of Farm Bureau**

A list of competencies in the "knowledge of Farm Bureau" area developed from the responses of the long interview can be found in Table 4-18. Those who participated in this interview process believed that county boards members needed to know: Farm Bureau's role in the development of policy, how powerful grassroots organizations can be and how they differ from other organizations, what their role was within the Farm Bureau organization, the organizational structure of Farm Bureau, the ability to look to the future needs of the organization, and to participate in Farm Bureau activities. Several responded that this needs to be stressed to county board members, as one participant stated, "county board members do not understand the strength or potential the organization has." Another indicated that county board members:

"Need to understand Florida Farm Bureau Federation and the American Farm Bureau Federation and the differences between the organization and structure of Farm Bureau and other organizations as in other organizations policy decisions are made from the top, with Farm Bureau, policy is an ongoing process and members have a real direct impact on the process."

Table 4-18 Knowledge of Farm Bureau Competencies Derived from Interviews with Florida Farm Bureau Officials (N=7)

Encourage Farm Bureau members to take on additional responsibilities.
Demonstrate ability to look at future needs of the Farm Bureau organization.
Identify the role of county Farm Bureaus is to help implement policy.
Identify the role of county Farm Bureaus is to advise the state organization on policy issues.
Identify the role of county Farm Bureaus is to serve as a springboard for ideas.
Identify the organizational structure of Farm Bureau.
Identify the history of Farm Bureau.
Define grassroots organizations.
Differentiate how grassroots organizations differ from other organizations.
Identify how powerful grassroots organizations can be.
Recognize your role within the Farm Bureau organization.
Determine how to be a progressive member of the organization.
Define Farm Bureau as a general farm organization that serves as a mechanism for people to work collectively together on political, social and economic ideas.
Differentiate between the organization and structure of Farm Bureau to other organizations who develop policy.
Demonstrate knowledge of the American Farm Bureau Federation.
Demonstrate knowledge of the Florida Farm Bureau Federation.
Participate in events that promote Farm Bureau.
Participate in events that promote agricultural education.
Participate in media and farm tours.

Responses from the interviews indicated that information on the history of Farm Bureau and knowledge of the AFBF and the FFBF is important for county board members to have, respondents felt that board members possessed some knowledge on both organizations, but felt that it is important for all board members to have this information.

Several of those individuals interviewed indicated that there is no job description for county board members so board members do not know what knowledge, such as Farm Bureau's organizational structure, is necessary to do their job. As one participant stated "Farm Bureau is one of the most recognized organizations in the state and county

board members need to have this appreciation and awareness of Farm Bureau to effectively work together."

### **Summary for objective two**

From the qualitative interviews with the state leaders of Florida Farm Bureau four theme areas emerged. These theme areas were leadership, political process, effective boards, and knowledge of Farm Bureau. From these interviews, competencies were derived and placed into the theme area they represented. These competencies were then used in the county board member survey instrument.

### **Objective Three**

#### **Measure the Extent to Which County Farm Bureau Members Practice the Leadership Expectations Held by State Farm Bureau Leaders and the Level of Importance They Assign to Those Skills**

A random sample of 280 county board members out of a total of 666 county Farm Bureau board members of the Florida Farm Bureau was sent a researcher-designed questionnaire (Appendix D), which reflected the competencies that were deemed important by the qualitative interviews of the state leadership of the FFBF. The competencies were divided into four sections: leadership, political process, effective boards, and knowledge of Farm Bureau.

This instrument was developed using the Borich needs assessment model, which assessed the respondents' perceptions about the importance of each item or competency and their proficiency (or ability) to apply this skill or knowledge. By analyzing the perceived importance and proficiency about a particular topic, individuals will learn the actual need for further education or programming efforts (Waters & Haskell, 1989).

A Likert-type scale from one to seven was located on the side of each competency, on the left survey participants were asked to rank how important they

believed it was for an ideal county Farm Bureau board member to possess the following abilities or competencies with 1=low and 7=high. On the right side, respondents were asked how proficient they believed they were at each ability or competency with 1=low and 7=high.

### **Leadership**

The first section of survey questionnaire was comprised of the competencies that belonged to the leadership theme and are reflected in Table 4-19. The Cronbach's alpha for this scale was 0.97 which indicates a high reliability for this list of competencies. The overall mean for the scale was 5.4. Two competencies had the highest means of ( $M=5.9$ ,  $SD=1.5$ ) which indicated that respondents felt they were the most important abilities or competencies of an ideal Farm Bureau country board member. These were: "choose individuals to serve the organization who are respected their communities" and "demonstrate ability to conduct an orderly meeting." The competency that received the lowest score was "recognize personality differences (as indicated by personality tests such as the Myers Briggs)" ( $M=4.7$ ,  $SD=1.7$ ).

**Table 4-19 Leadership Competencies of County Board Members – Importance (N=114)**

	Mean	SD
Choose individuals to serve the organization who are respected their communities	5.9	1.5
Demonstrate ability to conduct an orderly meeting	5.9	1.5
Use effective communication skills in working with groups	5.7	1.5
Practice progressiveness (not do things the way they have always been done)	5.7	1.4
Use effective communication skills in media interviews	5.6	1.6
Choose individuals to serve who are recognized as leaders by their peers	5.6	1.5
Demonstrate knowledge of the use of goals and objectives in an organization	5.5	1.5
Use effective communication skills in writing letters	5.5	1.5
Identify potential leaders	5.4	1.5
Demonstrate success in leadership capacities	5.4	1.4

Table 4-19. Continued

	Mean	SD
Recognize different types of leadership	5.3	1.5
Identify how committees are utilized in the Farm Bureau organization	5.3	1.4
Demonstrate ability to use conflict resolution practices	5.2	1.4
Demonstrate ability to use email and the internet	4.8	1.5
Recognize personality differences (as indicated by personality tests such as the Myers Briggs)	4.7	1.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>5.4</b>	<b>1.5</b>
<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>		<b>.97</b>

Note: Missing variables N=14

The next table (Table 4-20) represents respondents' proficiencies of the leadership competencies. The overall mean was 5.0. The lowest proficiency competency was "demonstrate ability to use email and the Internet" ( $M=4.5$ ,  $SD=2.0$ ). Respondents felt they were most proficient in the competency, "choose individuals to serve the organization who are respected by their communities" ( $M=5.5$ ,  $SD=1.3$ ). Those competencies that respondents felt they were least proficient in ranked below the overall mean and included: "recognize personality differences (as indicated by personality tests such as the Myers Briggs)" ( $M=4.7$ ,  $SD=1.3$ ), "identify how committees are utilized in the Farm Bureau organization" ( $M=4.9$ ,  $SD=1.4$ ), "use effective communication skills when writing letters" ( $M=4.8$ ,  $SD=1.6$ ), and "use effective communication skills in media interviews" ( $M=4.8$ ,  $SD=1.6$ ).

Table 4-20 Leadership Competencies of County Board Members – Proficiency (N=114)

	Mean	SD
Choose individuals to serve the organization who are respected in their communities	5.5	1.3
Demonstrate ability to conduct an orderly meeting	5.4	1.5
Practice progressiveness (not do things the way they have always been done)	5.4	1.2
Choose individuals to serve who are recognized as leaders by their peers	5.3	1.3
Identify potential leaders	5.2	1.3
Use effective communication skills in working with groups	5.2	1.3

Table 4-20. Continued

	Mean	SD
Demonstrate knowledge of the use of goals and objectives in an organization	5.1	1.2
Recognize different types of leadership	5.0	1.3
Demonstrate success in leadership capacities	5.0	1.1
Demonstrate ability to use conflict resolution practices	5.0	1.1
Identify how committees are utilized in the Farm Bureau organization	4.9	1.4
Use effective communication skills in writing letters	4.8	1.6
Use effective communication skills in media interviews	4.8	1.5
Recognize personality differences (as indicated by personality tests such as the Myers Briggs)	4.7	1.3
Demonstrate ability to use email and the internet	4.5	2.0
<b>Total Mean</b>	<b>5.0</b>	<b>1.3</b>

### Political Process

The twenty competencies that made up the political process importance section had a Cronbach's alpha of .98, which indicates a high internal consistency, or reliability of this section of the instrument. The overall mean was (5.5), the mean of competencies ranging from a high of (M=5.9, SD=1.5) for, "develop relationships with elected officials on the county level" to a low of (M=5.1, SD=1.5) for, "identify the political structure in Washington, D.C." The political process competencies that were rated high in importance were: "explain agricultural issues on the county level" (M=5.8, SD=1.5), "analyze policy development on issues that affect Farm Bureau on the county level" (M=5.7, SD=1.4), "develop relationships with elected officials on the state level" (M=5.7, SD=1.5), "support Farm Bureau legislative activities" (M=5.8, SD=1.6) and "participate in county government meetings impacting agriculture" (M=5.8, SD=1.6).

The four additional competencies that ranked the lowest in importance were: "demonstrate ability to formulate policy" (M=5.2, SD=1.3), "analyze agricultural issues

on the national level" ( $M=5.2$ ,  $SD=1.5$ ), "identify the political structure in Tallahassee" ( $M=5.4$ ,  $SD=1.5$ ), and "develop relationships with elected officials on the national level" ( $M=5.2$ ,  $SD=1.5$ ). Results can be found in Table 4-21.

**Table 4-21 Political Process Competencies of County Board Members – Importance (N=114)**

	Mean	SD
Develop relationships with elected officials on the county level	5.9	1.5
Participate in county government meetings impacting agriculture	5.8	1.6
Support Farm Bureau legislative activities	5.8	1.6
Explain agricultural issues on the county level	5.8	1.5
Develop relationships with elected officials on the state level	5.7	1.5
Analyze policy development on issues that affect Farm Bureau on the county level	5.7	1.4
Demonstrate knowledge of the political process	5.5	1.5
Determine how policy decisions made in Tallahassee impact Farm Bureau	5.5	1.5
Participate in state government meetings impacting agriculture	5.5	1.5
Analyze agricultural issues on the state level	5.5	1.4
Analyze policy development on issues that affect Farm Bureau on the state level	5.5	1.4
Choose ways to be more politically active	5.5	1.4
Demonstrate ability to be involved in local government	5.5	1.4
Identify the importance of regulatory agencies	5.5	1.4
Identify the political structure in Tallahassee	5.4	1.5
Analyze agricultural issues on the national level	5.2	1.5
Determine how policy decisions made in Washington, D.C. impact Farm Bureau	5.2	1.5
Develop relationships with elected officials on the national level	5.2	1.5
Demonstrate ability to formulate policy	5.2	1.3
Identify the political structure in Washington, D.C.	5.1	1.5
<b>Total Mean</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>1.5</b>
<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>.98</b>	

The overall mean ( $M=4.7$ ) for the proficiencies in the political process section was less than the overall mean of the importance section ( $M=5.5$ ). Table 4-22 shows the results of this scale. The competency that respondents felt least proficient in was "develop relationships with elected officials on the national level" ( $M=3.9$ ,  $SD=1.5$ ). The

two competencies that they felt the most proficient in were: “develop relationships with elected officials on the county level” ( $M=5.2$ ,  $SD=1.5$ ) and “support Farm Bureau legislative activities” ( $M=5.2$ ,  $SD=1.5$ ).

Table 4-22 Political Process Competencies of County Board Members – Proficiency (N=114)

	Mean	SD
Develop relationships with elected officials on the county level	5.2	1.5
Support Farm Bureau legislative activities	5.2	1.5
Explain agricultural issues on the county level	5.1	1.4
Demonstrate knowledge of the political process	5.0	1.5
Analyze policy development on issues that affect Farm Bureau on the county level	5.0	1.3
Participate in county government meetings impacting agriculture	4.9	1.5
Identify the importance of regulatory agencies	4.9	1.3
Demonstrate ability to be involved in local government	4.8	1.6
Determine how policy decisions are made in Tallahassee impact Farm Bureau	4.8	1.4
Choose ways to be more politically active	4.7	1.5
Develop relationships with elected officials on the state level	4.7	1.5
Identify the political structure in Tallahassee	4.6	1.5
Analyze agricultural issues on the state level	4.6	1.3
Analyze policy development on issues that affect Farm Bureau on the state level	4.6	1.3
Demonstrate ability to formulate policy	4.5	1.4
Analyze agricultural issues on the national level	4.3	1.4
Participate in state government meetings impacting agriculture	4.3	1.4
Determine how policy decisions made in Washington, D.C. impact Farm Bureau	4.3	1.3
Identify the political structure in Washington, D.C.	4.1	1.5
Develop relationships with elected officials on the national level	3.9	1.5
<b>Total Mean</b>	<b>4.7</b>	<b>1.4</b>

### Effective Boards

Table 4-23 represents the fifteen competencies related to importance in the effective board section of the survey instrument. There was a narrow range in the means for this section, ( $M=5.8$ ,  $SD=1.3$ ) to ( $M=6.3$ ,  $SD=1.5$ ), with the overall mean found in the middle of this range ( $M=6.1$ ) and a reliability of .99. Respondents indicated that two

competencies, “attend board meetings” (M=6.3, SD=1.5) and “pay attention to proceedings at meetings” (M=6.3, SD=1.4) were the most important competencies of this section. “Participate in Farm Bureau sponsored programs” (M=5.7, SD=1.5) scored the lowest.

Table 4-23 Effective Board Competencies of County Board Members – Importance (N=114)

	Mean	SD
Attend board meetings	6.3	1.5
Pay attention to proceedings at meetings	6.3	1.4
Demonstrate ability to work together for the benefit of the whole Farm Bureau organization	6.2	1.4
Demonstrate ability to work together to solve problems	6.2	1.4
Employ mutual respect for all board members	6.2	1.4
Support the organization	6.2	1.4
Support board decisions	6.2	1.4
Up-hold the bylaws of the organization	6.2	1.4
Demonstrate ability to work together to develop the goals necessary to achieve the vision of the organization	6.1	1.4
Represent Farm Bureau to others in the community	6.1	1.4
Support the county president	6.1	1.4
Demonstrate interest in serving on the county Farm Bureau board	5.9	1.6
Evaluate materials involving issues	5.9	1.5
Identify with the business structure in the community	5.8	1.3
Participate in Farm Bureau sponsored programs	5.7	1.5
<b>Total Mean</b>	<b>6.1</b>	<b>1.4</b>
<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>.99</b>	

“Pay attention to proceedings at meetings” (M=6.2, SD=1.5) had the highest mean for the proficiencies in the effective board section (Table 4-24), which indicates that respondents felt they were most proficient in this competency. The overall mean of this section was 5.9. The competency respondents felt least proficient in was “participate in Farm Bureau sponsored programs” (M=5.3, SD=1.2). The other competencies that scored the least of this section and would reflect the lowest proficiencies included: “evaluate materials involving issues” (M=5.8, SD=1.3), “identify

with the business structure in the community" ( $M=5.6$ ,  $SD=1.2$ ), "represent Farm Bureau to others in the community" ( $M=5.7$ ,  $SD=1.5$ ),

Table 4-24 Effective Board Competencies of County Board Members – Proficiency (N=114)

	Mean	SD
Pay attention to proceedings at meetings	6.2	1.5
Attend board meetings	6.1	1.5
Employ mutual respect for all board members	6.1	1.5
Up-hold the bylaws of the organization	6.1	1.5
Support board decisions	6.1	1.4
Support the county president	6.0	1.5
Support the organization	6.0	1.4
Demonstrate ability to work together to solve problems	6.0	1.3
Demonstrate ability to work together for the benefit of the whole Farm Bureau organization	5.9	1.5
Demonstrate ability to work together to develop the goals necessary to achieve the vision of the organization	5.9	1.4
Demonstrate interest in serving on the county Farm Bureau board	5.9	1.4
Evaluate materials involving issues	5.8	1.3
Represent Farm Bureau to others in the community	5.7	1.5
Identify with the business structure in the community	5.6	1.2
Participate in Farm Bureau sponsored programs	5.3	1.2
<b>Total Mean</b>	<b>5.9</b>	<b>1.4</b>

### **Knowledge of Farm Bureau**

Knowledge of Farm Bureau and the importance respondents place on the competencies found in this section had an overall mean of 5.6 with a reliability score of .98. The competency that respondents felt was most important to an ideal county board member was "participate in events that promote agricultural education" ( $M=6.0$ ,  $SD=1.5$ ). The competency, which received the lowest score, was "identify the history of Farm Bureau" ( $M=4.9$ ,  $SD=1.6$ ). Results of this table can be found in Table 4-25.

Table 4-25 Knowledge of Farm Bureau Competencies of County Board Members – Importance (N=114)

	Mean	SD
Participate in events that promote agricultural education	6.0	1.5
Participate in events that promote Farm Bureau	5.9	1.5
Demonstrate ability to look at future needs of the Farm Bureau organization	5.7	1.5
Identify how powerful grassroots organizations can be	5.7	1.5
Identify the role of county Farm Bureaus to advise the state organization on policy issues	5.7	1.5
Participate in media and farm tours	5.7	1.6
Determine how to be a progressive member of the organization	5.6	1.4
Encourage Farm Bureau members to take on additional responsibilities	5.6	1.4
Identify your role within the Farm Bureau organization	5.6	1.4
Identify the role of county Farm Bureaus to serve as a spring board for ideas	5.6	1.3
Define grassroots organizations	5.5	1.5
Demonstrate a knowledge of the Florida Farm Bureau Federation	5.5	1.5
Identify the organizational structure of Farm Bureau	5.5	1.4
Differentiate between the structure and organization of Farm Bureau to other organizations who develop policy	5.4	1.4
Demonstrate a knowledge of the American Farm Bureau Federation	5.2	1.6
Identify the history of Farm Bureau	4.9	1.6
<b>Total Mean</b>	<b>5.6</b>	<b>1.5</b>
<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>.98</b>	

The proficiency competencies of the knowledge of Farm Bureau section had a relatively low overall mean ( $M=4.9$ ) compared to the other sections. “Participate in events that promote Farm Bureau” ( $M=6.3$ ,  $SD=1.5$ ) received the highest scores and had the highest mean, which indicated that respondents felt they were most proficient in this competency. “Demonstrate a knowledge of the American Farm Bureau Federation” ( $M=4.2$ ,  $SD=1.4$ ) received the lowest score, which indicates that respondents felt they were least proficient in this competency. Results can be found in Table 4-26.

Table 4-26 Knowledge of Farm Bureau Competencies of County Board Members – Proficiency (N=114)

	Mean	SD
Participate in events that promote Farm Bureau	6.3	1.5
Participate in events that promote agricultural education	5.4	1.6
Identify your role within the Farm Bureau organization	5.2	1.4
Define grassroots organizations	5.1	1.5
Identify how powerful grassroots organizations can be	5.1	1.4
Demonstrate ability to look at future needs of the Farm Bureau organization	5.0	1.3
Determine how to be a progressive member of the organization	5.0	1.3
Identify the organizational structure of Farm Bureau	5.0	1.3
Identify the role of county Farm Bureaus to advise the state organization on policy issues	5.0	1.3
Identify the role of county Farm Bureaus to serve as a spring board for ideas	5.0	1.2
Encourage Farm Bureau members to take on additional responsibilities	4.9	1.4
Participate in media and farm tours	4.8	1.7
Demonstrate a knowledge of the Florida Farm Bureau Federation	4.7	1.4
Differentiate between the structure and organization of Farm Bureau to other organizations who develop policy	4.7	1.4
Identify the history of Farm Bureau	4.4	1.5
Demonstrate a knowledge of the American Farm Bureau Federation	4.2	1.4
<b>Total Mean</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>1.4</b>

The overall means for importance and proficiency of the four theme areas are compared in Table 4-27. As would be expected, the means of the importance sections are greater than the means for the proficiency sections. The largest “gap” between importance and proficiency occurred in the political process section, with importance rated 5.5 and proficiency 4.7. The smallest “gap” occurred in the effective board section, with importance receiving a 6.1 and proficiency a 5.9.

Table 4-27 Overall Importance and Proficiency Means of the Four Theme Areas

	Gap	Mean	SD
Political Process Importance		5.5	1.5
Political Process Proficiency	.8	4.7	1.4
Knowledge of Farm Bureau Importance		5.6	1.5
Knowledge of Farm Bureau Proficiency	.7	4.9	1.4

Table 4-27. Continued

	Gap	Mean	SD
Leadership Importance		{ 5.4	1.5
Leadership Proficiency	.4	{ 5.0	1.3
Effective Boards Importance		{ 6.1	1.4
Effective Boards Proficiency	.2	{ 5.9	1.4

### Comparisons of Importance and Proficiency Scores

The importance and proficiency mean scores for each competency were also compared. The comparisons for the leadership section can be found in Table 4-28. As would be expected the proficiency scores are less than the importance scores, which would indicate that respondents feel the competencies are important for ideal county board members to possess, but do not feel as proficient as the importance scores in these competencies. The greatest gap (0.8) is found in the competency “use effective communication skills in media interviews”, which would indicate that respondents feel it is important but they do not feel proficient in this skill area. “Recognize personality differences (as indicated by personality tests such as the Myers Briggs)” received the same mean score in each area ( $M=4.7$ ), which demonstrates that respondents do not feel this competency, is as important as the others and that they are not very proficient in it.

Table 4-28 Leadership Competencies – Comparisons of Importance and Proficiencies

	Mean Importance	Mean Proficiency	Gaps
Use effective communication skills in media interviews	5.6	4.8	0.8
Use effective communication skills in writing letters	5.5	4.8	0.7
Demonstrate ability to conduct an orderly meeting	5.9	5.4	0.5
Use effective communication skills in working with groups	5.7	5.2	0.5
Choose individuals to serve the organization who are respected in their communities	5.9	5.5	0.4
Demonstrate knowledge of the use of goals and objectives in an organization	5.5	5.1	0.4

Table 4-28. Continued

	Mean Importance	Mean Proficiency	Gaps
Demonstrate success in leadership capacities	5.4	5.0	0.4
Identify how committees are utilized in the Farm Bureau organization	5.3	4.9	0.4
Practice progressiveness (not do things the way they have always been done)	5.7	5.4	0.3
Choose individuals to serve who are recognized as leaders by their peers	5.6	5.3	0.3
Recognize different types of leadership	5.3	5.0	0.3
Demonstrate ability to use email and the internet	4.8	4.5	0.3
Identify potential leaders	5.4	5.2	0.2
Demonstrate ability to use conflict resolution practices	5.2	5.0	0.2
Recognize personality differences (as indicated by personality tests such as the Myers Briggs)	4.7	4.7	0
<b>Total Mean</b>	<b>5.4</b>	<b>5.0</b>	<b>0.4</b>
<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>0.97</b>		

Several competencies in the political process section had large gaps between the importance and proficiency scores. As with the previous section, all the mean proficiency scores in this section were less than the mean importance scores. Four competencies had a gap greater ( $>1.00$ ) than 1.00, these were: “identify the political structure in Washington, D.C.” (MI=5.1, MP=4.1), “develop relationships with elected officials on the county level” (MI=5.7, MP=4.7), “develop relationships with elected officials on the national level” (MI=5.2, MP=3.9), “identify the importance of regulatory agencies” (MI=6.1, MP=4.9), and “participate in state government meetings impacting agriculture” (MI=5.5, MP=4.3). Table 4-29 shows the results of this data.

Table 4-29 Political Process Competencies – Comparisons of Importance and Proficiencies

	Mean Importance	Mean Proficiency	Gaps
Develop relationships with elected officials on the national level	5.2	3.9	1.3

Table 4-29. Continued

	Mean Importance	Mean Proficiency	Gaps
Participate in state government meetings impacting agriculture	5.5	4.3	1.2
Develop relationships with elected officials on the state level	5.7	4.7	1.0
Identify the political structure in Washington, D.C.	5.1	4.1	1.0
Participate in county government meetings impacting agriculture	5.8	4.9	0.9
Analyze agricultural issues on the state level	5.5	4.6	0.9
Analyze policy development on issues that affect Farm Bureau on the state level	5.5	4.6	0.9
Analyze agricultural issues on the national level	5.2	4.3	0.9
Determine how policy decisions made in Washington, D.C. impact Farm Bureau	5.2	4.3	0.9
Choose ways to be more politically active	5.5	4.7	0.8
Identify the political structure in Tallahassee	5.4	4.6	0.8
Develop relationships with elected officials on the county level	5.9	5.2	0.7
Explain agricultural issues on the county level	5.8	5.1	0.7
Analyze policy development on issues that affect Farm Bureau on the county level	5.7	5.0	0.7
Demonstrate ability to be involved in local government	5.5	4.8	0.7
Determine how policy decisions are made in Tallahassee impact Farm Bureau	5.5	4.8	0.7
Demonstrate ability to formulate policy	5.2	4.5	0.7
Support Farm Bureau legislative activities	5.8	5.2	0.6
Identify the importance of regulatory agencies	5.5	4.9	0.6
Demonstrate knowledge of the political process	5.5	5.0	0.5
<b>Total Mean</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>4.7</b>	<b>0.8</b>
<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>0.98</b>		

The scores in the effective board section had a narrower range between the two means (MI=6.1, MP=5.9), which indicated that the mean scores of the importance competencies were only slightly higher than the mean scores of the proficiency competencies. Only two, “participate in Farm Bureau sponsored programs” (MI=5.7, MP=5.3) and “represent Farm Bureau to others in the community” (MI=6.1, MP=5.7)

had a gap of .04, which would indicate that respondents feel it is important, but feel they are not as proficient in this area. The proficiency means are all less than the importance means as with the other two sections. The results of the comparison of the means for importance and proficiency are presented in Table 4.30.

**Table 4-30 Effective Board Competencies – Comparisons of Importance and Proficiencies**

	Mean Importance	Mean Proficiency	Gaps
Participate in Farm Bureau sponsored programs	5.7	5.3	0.4
Represent Farm Bureau to others in the community	6.1	5.7	0.4
Attend board meetings	6.3	6.1	0.3
Demonstrate ability to work together for the benefit of the whole Farm Bureau organization	6.2	5.9	0.3
Demonstrate ability to work together to solve problems	6.2	6.0	0.2
Support the organization	6.2	6.0	0.2
Demonstrate ability to work together to develop the goals necessary to achieve the vision of the organization	6.1	5.9	0.2
Identify with the business structure in the community	5.8	5.6	0.2
Pay attention to proceedings at meetings	6.3	6.2	0.1
Employ mutual respect for all board members	6.2	6.1	0.1
Support board decisions	6.2	6.1	0.1
Up-hold the bylaws of the organization	6.2	6.1	0.1
Support the county president	6.1	6.0	0.1
Evaluate materials involving issues	5.9	5.8	0.1
Demonstrate interest in serving on the county Farm Bureau board	5.9	5.9	0
<b>Total Mean</b>	<b>6.1</b>	<b>5.9</b>	<b>0.2</b>
<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>0.895</b>		

As with the three previous sections, the overall mean scores of importance were greater than the overall mean scores of proficiency in the knowledge of Farm Bureau section, found in Table 4-31, except for one. “Participate in events that promote Farm Bureau” had a higher proficiency mean score ( $M=6.3$ ) than an importance score ( $M=5.9$ ). Individuals who responded to this survey believe that they are more proficient in this area

than the area is important. One competency had a wider gap than the other fourteen competencies in this section. “Demonstrate a knowledge of the AFBF” (MI=5.2, MP=4.2), which would indicate that respondents felt it important and also felt they were not as proficient in this skill area. The remaining competencies had a gap between the two mean scores that ranged from 0.4 to 0.8.

Table 4-31 Knowledge of Farm Bureau Competencies – Comparisons of Importance and Proficiencies

	Mean Importance	Mean Proficiency	Gaps
Demonstrate a knowledge of the American Farm Bureau Federation	5.2	4.2	1.0
Participate in media and farm tours	5.7	4.8	0.9
Demonstrate a knowledge of the Florida Farm Bureau Federation	5.5	4.7	0.8
Demonstrate ability to look at future needs of the Farm Bureau organization	5.7	5.0	0.7
Identify the role of county Farm Bureaus to advise the state organization on policy issues	5.7	5.0	0.7
Encourage Farm Bureau members to take on additional responsibilities	5.6	4.9	0.7
Differentiate between the structure and organization of Farm Bureau to other organizations who develop policy	5.4	4.7	0.7
Participate in events that promote agricultural education	6.0	5.4	0.6
Identify how powerful grassroots organizations can be	5.7	5.1	0.6
Determine how to be a progressive member of the organization	5.6	5.0	0.6
Identify the role of county Farm Bureaus to serve as a spring board for ideas	5.6	5.0	0.6
Identify the organizational structure of Farm Bureau	5.5	5.0	0.5
Identify the history of Farm Bureau	4.9	4.4	0.5
Participate in events that promote Farm Bureau	5.9	6.3	0.4
Identify your role within the Farm Bureau organization	5.6	5.2	0.4
Define grassroots organizations	5.5	5.1	0.4
<b>Total Mean</b>	<b>5.6</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>0.7</b>
<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>		<b>0.98</b>	

### **Summary of objective three**

In this objective, the importance that county board members placed on the competencies in the four theme areas and their proficiency of each competency was measured. Results found that county board members felt they were least proficient in political process competencies and the most proficient in the competencies found in the effective board theme area. The greatest “gap” between importance and proficiency was found in the political process theme area, while the effective board theme area had the smallest “gap”.

### **Objective Four**

#### **Determine Leadership Attitude, Will, and Desire of Active Florida Farm Bureau Members**

Active Florida Farm Bureau members comprise 25% of the total membership of the FFBF. A sample of 420 active members out of 37,000 total active membership was randomly selected to receive the researcher-developed survey questionnaire (Appendix E) which attempted to determine the attitude, will and desire of active Florida Farm Bureau members towards increasing their participation (or leadership) in their county Farm Bureaus, specifically serving on their county Farm Bureau boards.

The survey questionnaire was divided into three sections to address the three components of this objective, the survey respondents’ attitude, will, and desire. County Farm Bureau boards are composed of volunteer leaders who are willing to serve their local county Farm Bureau organization. To measure the attitudes that active members have towards volunteering to serve on their local county Farm Bureau board, a semantic differential scale (Osgood et al., 1971) was developed and included as a section in the survey questionnaire.

A twelve-item Likert-type scale instrument was used to measure the will that active members possess in regards toward serving on their local county Farm Bureau board. Items used in this section were derived from responses from the state Farm Bureau leadership on why individuals would serve on a county Farm Bureau board and critical skills they would need to serve.

The third section of this survey questionnaire attempted to quantify the motivations of individuals and provide a measurement of the desire of respondents to volunteer as board members.

Results from this survey questionnaire will be discussed in three parts, which correspond with the three sections of the survey questionnaire. This discussion will begin with explaining the “desire” portion of this objective, what motivates individuals to assume leadership responsibilities.

### **Motivation Sources Inventory**

The Motivation Sources Inventory was used in this section to provide information on the motivations of individuals. This inventory, developed by Barbuto and Scholl (1998), was created as an inventory to measure motivation sources. The sources of motivation measured included: external self-concept-based motivation, internal self-concept-based motivation, intrinsic process motivation, and instrumental motivation.

In external self-concept-based motivation, an individual behaves in ways to gain acceptance and status from reference group members. Motivation is other-directed and the ideal self is adopted from role expectations of a particular reference group. This source is comparable to the social identity theory. Internal self-concept-based motivation is internally based when the individual sets internal standards of traits and values that

become the basis for the ideal self. In intrinsic process motivation, an individual is motivated to engage in certain types of behavior for the sheer fun of it. The work itself acts as an incentive as it provides enjoyment. Instrumental motivation rewards individuals when they perceive their behavior will lead to extrinsic tangible outcomes such as promotions, pay, and bonuses (Barbuto & Scholl, 1998).

There were twenty-four items used in the survey questionnaire. Respondents were asked to rank their agreement for these twenty-four items on a seven point scale with 1=strongly disagree and 7=strongly agree. The six unique questions per category of motivation were randomly ordered in the survey questionnaire. Results of the inventory can be found in Table 4-32.

The Cronbach's alpha of the entire inventory was 0.8, which indicates that the inventory had a high level of internal consistency or reliability. This is the degree to which the items that make up the scale are all measuring the same underlying attribute (Pallant, 2001). The attribute being measured in this inventory is motivation and due to the high Cronbach's alpha, the inventory can be deemed reliable.

External self-concept motivation and intrinsic process motivation received the lowest total mean scores, both scored 3.7, which would indicate that respondents of this survey are not motivated by trying to gain the acceptance of others or by the fun and enjoyment of activities. Instrumental motivation received a mean score of 4.3 which is slightly more than external self-concept and intrinsic motivation and would explain that tangible rewards, such as pay and bonuses motivates individuals more than the fun of the activities or the acceptance of others. Internal self-concept motivation received the

highest mean score of 5.8, which explains that respondents of this survey are motivated by their desire to meet their own personal standards.

The two statements that received the lowest mean score ( $M=2.7$ ) were, “I often make decisions based on what others will think” and “I often put off work so that I can do something else that is more fun” could be found in the two sources of motivation that scored the lowest. Four statements scored 6.0, “I consider myself a self-motivated person,” “I try to make sure that my decisions are consistent with my personal standards of behavior,” “I like to do things which give me a sense of personal achievement,” and “It is important that I work for a company that allows me to use my skills and talents.” These four statements are all found in the internal self-concept motivation factor and provide strong evidence of why the internal self-concept motivation factor scored the highest.

In the external self-concept motivation factor, “I often make decisions based on what others think” ( $M=2.7$ ,  $SD=1.4$ ) scored the lowest, while “It is important to me that others approve of my behavior” score the highest ( $M=4.8$ ,  $SD=1.6$ ). “I work harder on a project if public recognition is attached to it” ( $M=2.8$ ,  $SD=1.6$ ) and “I give my best effort when I know that it will be seen by the most influential people in an organization” ( $M=3.2$ ,  $SD=1.7$ ) also scored lower than the mean of this factor group ( $M=3.7$ ,  $SD=1.6$ ).

In the other lower scoring motivation factor, intrinsic process, the highest scoring item was “If I didn’t enjoy doing my job at work I would leave” ( $M=5.0$ ,  $SD=1.6$ ). The lowest scoring item was “I often put off work so that I can do something else that is more fun” ( $M=2.7$ ,  $SD=1.7$ ). Three other items in this factor all had mean scores which

were lower than the total mean of 3.7, “I only like to do things that are fun” ( $M=3.5$ ,  $SD=1.4$ ), “when choosing jobs I usually choose the one that sounds like the most fun” ( $M=3.2$ ,  $SD=1.6$ ), and “if choosing between two jobs, the most important criteria are ‘which is more fun’” ( $M=3.3$ ,  $SD=1.6$ ). “The people I choose to spend my time with are the most fun to be with” ( $M=4.9$ ,  $SD=1.5$ ) was the only other statement that scored above the mean of this factor.

The instrumental motivation factor had a mean score of 4.3. The item that scored highest was “a day’s work for a day’s pay” ( $M=5.3$ ,  $SD=1.9$ ). The lowest scoring item of this factor was “I would work harder if I knew that my effort would lead to higher pay” ( $M=3.7$ ,  $SD=1.9$ ). The only other item that scored about the mean of 4.3 was “people should always keep their eyes and ears open for better job opportunities” ( $M=4.9$ ,  $SD=1.6$ ).

The internal self-concept factor received the highest mean score of all four factors ( $M=5.8$ ). There was only one item that scored lower than the overall factor mean, “I need to know that my skills and values are impacting the organization’s success” ( $M=5.1$ ,  $SD=1.5$ ). Though it scored the lowest for this factor, the mean of this item ( $M=5.1$ ,  $SD=1.5$ ) is still higher than the total mean scores for the three other factors ( $M=3.7$ ,  $SD=1.6$ ;  $M=3.7$ ,  $SD=1.6$ ;  $M=4.3$ ,  $SD=1.8$ ). One item was also above the total mean, “decisions I make will reflect high standards that I’ve set for myself” ( $M=6.9$ ,  $SD=1.3$ ).

Table 4-32 Motivation Sources Inventory (N=101)

	Mean	SD
External Self-Concept		
It is important to me that others approve of my behavior	4.8	1.6
If choosing jobs I want one that allows me to be recognized for successes	4.3	1.7
Those people who make the most friends have lived the fullest lives	4.2	1.8
I give my best effort when I know that it will be seen by the most influential people in an organization	3.2	1.7

Table 4-32. Continued

	Mean	SD
I work harder on a project if public recognition is attached to it	2.8	1.6
I often make decisions based on what others will think	2.7	1.4
<b>Total Mean</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>1.6</b>
Internal Self-Concept		
I consider myself a self-motivated person	6.0	1.1
I try to make sure that my decisions are consistent with my personal standards of behavior	6.0	1.2
I like to do things which give me a sense of personal achievement	6.0	1.0
It is important that I work for a company that allows me to use my skills and talents	6.0	1.0
Decisions I make will reflect high standards that I've set for myself	5.9	1.3
I need to know that my skills and values are impacting the organization's success	5.1	1.5
<b>Total Mean</b>	<b>5.8</b>	<b>1.2</b>
Intrinsic Process		
If I didn't enjoy doing my job at work I would leave	5.0	1.6
The people I choose to spend my time with are the most fun to be with	4.9	1.5
I only like to do things that are fun	3.5	1.4
If choosing between two jobs, the most important criteria are 'which is more fun?'	3.3	1.6
When choosing jobs I usually choose the one that sounds like the most fun	3.2	1.6
I often put off work so that I can do something else that is more fun	2.7	1.7
<b>Total Mean</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>1.6</b>
Instrumental		
A day's work for a day's pay	5.3	1.9
People should always keep their eyes and ears open for better job opportunities	4.9	1.6
When choosing jobs I usually choose the one that pays the most	4.1	1.8
Job requirements dictate how much effort I exert during work	3.9	1.9
I would work harder if I knew that my effort would lead to higher pay	3.7	1.9
At work, my favorite day of the week is 'payday'	3.6	1.7
<b>Total Mean</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>1.8</b>
<b>Overall Scale Mean</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>1.6</b>
<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>.8</b>	

### Attitudes Towards Volunteering

A semantic differential scale was constructed to determine respondents' attitudes towards volunteering. The semantic differential was developed as a measurement of the direction and the intensity of feelings towards an attitude (Osgood et al., 1971; Mehling,

1960). In the semantic differential, there are seven-step scales bounded on each end by polar adjectives, which can be loaded onto three factors, evaluative, potency, and activity (Brinton, 1961).

The theoretical analysis of the semantic differential is summarized by Osgood et al., (1971):

The location of a concept in the semantic space defined by a set of factors is equated with the evocation by the concept of a set of component mediating reactions, direction in space being equated to what mediators are evoked (from among reciprocally antagonistic pairs) and distance from the origin being equated to how intensely (with what habit strength) these are evoked. (p. 29-30)

The adjective pairs used in a semantic differential can be categorized into three dimensions of the semantic space: evaluative, potency and activity. Results from research conducted by Osgood et al. (1971) have shown that the evaluative factor plays an important role in meaningful judgments as the evaluative factor is first in magnitude in the semantic space. The potency and activity factors also provide determinants in meaningful judgments of the semantic space, though to a lesser extent than the evaluative factor.

In factor analysis of semantic differentials, the evaluative factor in human judgment regularly appears first and accounts for approximately half to three-quarters of the variance. The second dimension of the semantic space is the potency factor, which accounts for half as much as the variance of the evaluative factor. The potency factor is concerned with the associations of size, weight, and toughness. The activity factor is the third dimension and is equal to or a little smaller in magnitude than the potency factor (Osgood et al., 1971).

For this part of the survey instrument, the researcher developed a semantic differential scale to determine respondents' attitudes towards volunteering. This scale included four adjective pairings, or scales, per factor for a total of twelve scales. These scales were randomly ordered and several were reverse coded. These adjective pairs had a "positive" end and a "negative" end, the reverse coding was necessary so all the positive associations did not appear on one side of the scale. Adjective pairs were chosen from those, which had the highest loading on the three factors, evaluative, activity, and potency. Adjective pairs used for the evaluative factor included: good-bad, negative-positive, boring-interesting, and important-unimportant. Those pairs used for the potency factor included: youthful-mature, constrained-free, masculine-feminine, and serious-humorous. The adjective pairs used to describe the activity factor were: passive-active, meaningful-meaningless, complex-simple, and intentional-unintentional.

Respondents were asked to indicate their view toward volunteering, by marking one of the seven spaces between the adjective pair. The data was analyzed by grouping the adjective pairs into their three factors and determining the mean for each factor. "The average factor scores for a group are associated with some measure of dispersion or variability; this measure is presumably an index of the consistency of the meaning of that concept in the culture" (Osgood et al., 1971, p. 88).

The Cronbach's alpha for the overall scale was 0.81, which indicates a high reliability for the scale. The overall mean of the scale was 5.6 and the overall standard deviation was 1.1. The mean for the evaluative factor was 6.0, which was the highest mean of the three factors. The evaluative factor had a reliability of 0.81. The lowest mean occurred in the potency factor ( $M=5.1$ ,  $SD=1.2$ ), with a reliability of 0.47. The

mean of the activity factor was found in the middle ( $M=5.6$ ,  $SD=1.0$ ) and had a reliability of 0.66.

Results of this analysis of the semantic differential scale on the attitudes towards volunteering can be found in Table 4-33. The adjective pair of important-unimportant received the highest mean score of the evaluative factor ( $M=6.1$ ,  $SD=.87$ ). The pairing of good-bad had the lowest mean of the evaluative factor ( $M=5.9$ ,  $SD=1.0$ ). The other two items in the evaluative factor, positive-negative and interesting-boring, had means of 6.0, which were equal to the total mean for this factor.

The activity factor had the second highest mean ( $M=5.6$ ,  $SD=1.0$ ). The pairings of meaningful-meaningless had the highest mean of this factor and of the entire scale ( $M=6.2$ ,  $SD=.87$ ). The pairing of complex-simple had the lowest mean of this factor ( $M=5.2$ ,  $SD=1.0$ ). There was one other pairing, active-passive, which had a mean ( $M=5.5$ ,  $SD=1.3$ ), which was also below the mean of this factor. The remaining item pairing, intentional-unintentional, had a mean that was equal to the mean of this factor ( $M=5.6$ ;  $SD=1.0$ ).

The lowest mean of the three factors ( $M=5.1$ ,  $SD=1.2$ ) belonged to the potency factor. Mature-youthful provided the lowest mean of this factor ( $M=4.9$ ,  $SD=1.4$ ) and for the entire scale. The pair of serious-humorous had the highest mean of this factor ( $M=5.4$ ,  $SD=1.1$ ) and was the only item, which was greater, then the group mean of 5.1. The two remaining adjective pairs, free-constrained and masculine-feminine, both had the same means ( $M=5.1$ ,  $SD=1.2$ ), which were equal to the group mean.

Results of this semantic differential scale indicate that how the volunteering opportunity is rated or evaluated contributes the greatest to the attitude towards

volunteering. If a volunteer activity or job is considered positive, important or interesting then it is likely to be thought of favorable and contributes strongly to a positive attitude towards volunteering.

**Table 4-33 Attitudes on Volunteering of Active Members (N=96)**

Evaluative Factors	Mean	SD
Good – Bad	5.9	1.0
Positive - Negative	6.0	1.1
Interesting - Boring	6.0	.90
Important -Unimportant	6.1	.87
<b>Total Mean</b>	<b>6.0</b>	<b>.97</b>
Potency Factors		
Mature - Youthful	4.9	1.4
Free - Constrained	5.1	1.2
Masculine - Feminine	5.1	1.2
Serious - Humorous	5.4	1.1
<b>Total Mean</b>	<b>5.1</b>	<b>1.2</b>
Activity Factors		
Active - Passive	5.5	1.3
Meaningful - Meaningless	6.2	.87
Complex - Simple	5.2	1.0
Intentional -Unintentional	5.6	1.0
<b>Total Mean</b>	<b>5.6</b>	<b>1.0</b>
<b>Overall Scale Mean</b>	<b>5.6</b>	<b>1.1</b>
<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>		<b>.811</b>

### Serving on County Boards

To determine why individuals would serve on their local county Farm Bureau board, or the “will” portion of this objective, a twelve question Likert-type scale was developed by the researcher. Items in this scale were derived from the interviews with the state Farm Bureau leadership and were all important constructs of what makes an effective county Farm Bureau board member.

Table 4-34 provides the results of the analysis of this scale. The high Cronbach's alpha of this scale, 0.838, indicates that all the items in this scale are measuring the same

underlying theme, which is the respondents view of serving on county Farm Bureau boards. The overall mean of this scale was 3.9. The item with the highest mean (M=5.0, SD=1.2) was "I am satisfied with the Farm Bureau organization and its goals." The item with the lowest mean was "family members have served on the board and now it's my turn" (M=1.9, SD=1.3).

Several items on the scale had means, which were above the scale mean. "I believe my county Farm Bureau board is active and accomplishing it's goals" (M=4.8, SD=1.4), "I believe I work effectively with individuals and groups" (M=4.9, SD=1.5), "I understand politics and the policy development process" (M=4.0, SD=1.7), "I am able to seek out alternative solutions to problems" (M=4.8, SD=1.4), and "I am comfortable with technology and the use of email and the internet" (M=4.4, SD=2.1).

Table 4-34 Why Active Members May Serve on County Farm Bureau Boards (N=98)

	Mean	SD
I am satisfied with the Farm Bureau organization and it's goals	5.0	1.2
I believe I work effectively with individuals and groups	4.9	1.5
I am able to seek out alternative solutions to problems	4.8	1.4
I believe my county Farm Bureau board is active and accomplishing it's goals	4.8	1.4
I am comfortable with technology and the use of email and the internet	4.4	2.1
I understand politics and the policy development process	4.0	1.7
I am comfortable speaking to individuals, groups and the media	3.8	1.8
I have a desire to be more involved in the Farm Bureau organization	3.5	1.7
I believe it is important to attend all Farm Bureau functions (meetings, activities, programs, etc.)	3.5	1.6
I am willing to help recruit more Farm Bureau members	3.1	1.6
I would enjoy the recognition of being a board member	2.7	1.6
Family members have served on the board and now it's my turn	1.9	1.3
<b>Total Mean</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>1.6</b>
<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>		<b>0.84</b>

Results from this section of the survey would indicate that individuals are more likely to serve on their county Farm Bureau board when they are satisfied with the Farm Bureau organization and it's goals, because they believe that they work effectively with

individuals and groups and that their county Farm Bureau is active and accomplishing it's goals. They are not likely to serve because they have had family members who have served and believe that it is now their turn.

### **Summary of objective four**

From this survey instrument, the leadership attitude, will, and desire of active Florida Farm Bureau members was measured. It was determined that active members are motivated by internal self-concept factors, which are those factors that are internally based in an individual and become the basis for the ideal self. Active members have positive attitude towards volunteering when they rate volunteering opportunities favorably and are more likely to serve on their county Farm Bureau board because of their satisfaction with the Farm Bureau organization and it's goals.

### **Objective Five**

#### **Determine Reason why Local Farm Bureau Members Chose to Participate or not Participate in Leadership Roles in Local County Farm Bureau Boards**

Ary et al., (1996) define multiple regression as the prediction of a criterion using two or more predictor variables. Field (2000) describes a regression analysis as fitting a predictive model to the data and using it to predict values of the dependent variable from one or more independent variables. Multiple regression is useful in addressing a variety of research topics, such as how well a set of variables is able to predict a particular outcome (Pallant, 2001).

Multiple linear regression was used to accomplish this objective. The outcome that was predicted to satisfy this objective was desire to participate on local county Farm Bureau boards. The dependent variable used in the multiple regression models was

derived from the total mean scores of the twelve questions on the "Serving on County Boards" section of the instrument given to active Farm Bureau members.

There were a total of twenty-four independent variables that were considered for use as predictors in the multiple regression analysis, they included: motivation external self-concept (a factor derived from obtaining the mean of the six external self-concept statements on the Motivation Sources Inventory section of the instrument given to active Farm Bureau members), motivation internal self-concept factor (derived from the six internal self-concept statements on the Motivation Sources Inventory section), motivation intrinsic process (derived from the six intrinsic process statements on the Motivation Sources Inventory section), motivation instrumentation (derived from the six instrumentation statements on the Motivation Sources Inventory section), volunteering evaluative factor (derived from obtaining the mean of the four evaluative adjective pairs on the volunteer section of the instrument given to active Farm Bureau members), volunteering potency factor (derived from obtaining the mean of the four potency adjective pairs), volunteering activity factor (derived from obtaining the mean of the four activity adjective pairs, years of membership in Farm Bureau, family involvement in Farm Bureau, time devoted to Farm Bureau, Farm Bureau events attended in the past year, involved in other agricultural organizations, belong to other organizations, marital status, children, gender, age, member of 4-H, member of FFA, member of other youth development organizations, participated in leadership development programs, farm size, and work off the farm.

These variables were chosen as they all represent important factors in the literature that suggests why individuals volunteer to take on additional leadership roles

such as serving on their local county Farm Bureau boards. Leadership is a function of these variables and this regression analysis will determine which variables are the greatest predictors of why individuals chose to participate or not participate in leadership roles in their local county Farm Bureau boards.

There are several procedures available for selecting the independent variables in the multiple regression equation. Stepwise selection is the most commonly used method (Ary et al., 1996). A type of stepwise selection, a backward selection, is a method of multiple regression in which each time a predictor is added to the equation, a removal test is made of the least useful predictor. The regression equation is constantly being reviewed to see whether any redundant predictors can be removed. The first step in this model is placing all the predictors in the model and calculating the contribution of each. If a predictor meets the criteria for removal, if it is not making a statistically significant contribution, then it is removed from the model and then the model is recalculated for the remaining predictors (Field, 2000).

The first variable considered is the one with the largest positive or negative correlation with the criterion, this correlation is the Pearson correlation and is the second table (after the descriptive statistics table) given in a multiple regression analysis using SPSS<sup>©</sup> 12.0 for Windows (Ary et al., 1996). Agresti and Finlay (1997) state that the larger the absolute value of  $r$ , the Pearson correlation, the stronger the degree of linear association between the independent and dependent variable.

In a multiple regression analysis, there are several other variables that need to be considered when deciding if a dependent variable may be used to predict an independent variable. The value  $\beta$  or Beta value is the second variable that is examined. It is reported

as both unstandardized and standardized, though for this analysis, the standardized value of  $\beta$  is of importance. The standardized values are values for each of the different variables that have been converted to the same scale so as to compare them. The variable that has the largest  $\beta$  value makes the strongest unique contribution to explaining the dependent variable, when the variances explained by all the other variables in the model are controlled for (Pallant, 2001).

The level of significance needs to be examined as this explains whether the variable is making a significant unique contribution to the multiple regression equation. If the significance value is less than .05 ( $p < .05$ ), then the variable is making a significant unique contribution to the prediction of the dependent variable, if it is greater than .05 ( $p > .05$ ), then the variable is not making a significant contribution to the prediction of the dependent variable (Field, 2000; Pallant, 2001).

The other variables used to report the findings for this objective are the R-squared, adjusted R-squared, degrees of freedom (df) and the  $t$ -statistic. The R-square value is a measure of how much the variability in the outcome model is accounted for by the predictors used. The adjusted R-square value is used when a small sample is used and the R-square value tends to be an overestimation of the true value. Both the R-square and adjusted R-square variables are reported as a decimal number, for example, 0.6665, and used as a percentage, 66.5%, to indicate how well the model generalizes to the population (Pallant, 2001). Degrees of freedom are the number of observations free to vary around a constant parameter and used to determine the appropriate critical values in statistical tables for evaluating the statistic (Ary et al., 1996, p.566). The  $t$ -statistic, or

test statistic, indicates whether there is a statistically significant difference in the mean scores of variables being analyzed (Pallant, 2001).

Table 4-35 provides the initial Pearson correlation, degrees of freedom, and significance values for the twenty-four independent variables that were identified for use in the stepwise, backward multiple regression analysis used to predict participation on local county Farm Bureau boards. Pearson correlation values, *r*, that are close to or above .3 (both positive and negative) were identified. The “volunteering evaluative factor” had the highest *r-value* of .47.

Table 4-35 Pearson Product Moment Correlations Between Independent Variables and Serving on County Boards (N=81)

	df	r	Sig.(2-tailed)
Serving on County Boards	79	1.00	.
Motivation External Self-Concept Factor	79	.16	.12
Motivation Internal Self-Concept Factor	79	.26	.01
Motivation Intrinsic Process Factor	79	-.11	.32
Motivation Instrumental Factor	79	-.07	.54
Volunteering Evaluative Factor	79	.47	.00
Volunteering Potency Factor	79	.17	.11
Volunteering Activity Factor	79	.39	.00
Years of Membership in Farm Bureau	79	.08	.49
Family Involvement in Farm Bureau	79	.11	.31
Time Devoted to Farm Bureau per Month	79	.12	.29
Number of Farm Bureau Events Attended	79	.30	.01
Involved in Other Agricultural Organizations	79	.14	.18
Belong to Other Organizations	79	.35	.00
Marital Status	79	.04	.71
Children	79	.20	.06
Gender	79	-.05	.67
Age	79	-.13	.34
Member of 4-H	79	.20	.06
Member of FFA	79	-.09	.93
Member of Other Youth Development Organizations	79	.38	.00
Participated in Leadership Development Programs	79	.31	.00
Farm Size	79	.20	.14
Work Off Farm	79	.16	.17

Note: Model is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

These factors all have a strong relationship to the independent variable of desire to serve on county boards. These factors also had significance values that were less than or equal to .01 which indicates that the variables are making unique significant contributions to predicting the dependent variable.

Table 4-36 provides a correlation matrix for eighteen of the independent variables, these variables were included in the matrix if the correlation value was greater than .35 and were statistically significant ( $p < .05$ ). This matrix provides further evidence about the correlations of the independent variables, not only with the dependent variable (serving on county boards), but with each other. Correlation and significance values which show strong relationships and significance are highlighted in bold face type

The factor “volunteering evaluative factor” had the strongest correlation in the multiple regression analysis. This factor correlated strongest with the “volunteering activity factor” ( $r = .65$ ), which would indicate individuals want to participate in activities they place a high evaluative value to. The correlation between these two factors has the highest correlational value in the table ( $r = .65$ ).

Other correlations found in Table 4-36 include the correlation of family involvement with: “years in Farm Bureau” ( $r = .28$ ), “time devoted to Farm Bureau” ( $r = .37$ ), “events attended” ( $r = .22$ ), “member of 4-H” ( $r = .34$ ), “member of other youth development organizations” ( $r = .22$ ), “farm size” ( $r = .28$ ), and “motivation internal self-concept” ( $r = .20$ ). The strongest correlation was with “member of FFA” ( $r = .46$ ).

Table 4-36 Correlations of Independent Variables (N=81)

	V1	V2	V3	V4	V5	V6	V7	V8	V9	V10	V11	V12	V13	V14	V15	V16	V17	
Yrs Mem (V1)	r Sig.																	
Family (V2)	r Sig.	.28 .01																
Time/month (V3)	r Sig.	.21 .05	.37 .00															
Events/year (V4)	r Sig.	.37 .00	.22 .03	.09 .38														
Other Orgs. (V5)	r Sig.	.20 .05	.16 .11	.03 .76	.25 .02													
Age (V6)	r Sig.	.38 .00	.10 .40	.03 .79	-.04 .78	.09 .47												
4-H (V7)	r Sig.	.07 .50	.33 .01	.11 .26	.18 .08	.18 .08	.01 .91											
FFA (V8)	r Sig.	-.08 .44	.45 .00	.00 .97	.02 .83	-.03 .75	-.04 .70	.44 .00										
Youth (V9)	r Sig.	.16 .11	.22 .02	.05 .59	.22 .03	.34 .00	-.04 .69	.42 .00	.42 .15	.15 .12								
L'Ship Pgrms (V10)	r Sig.	-.01 .88	.10 .29	.00 .94	.29 .05	.29 .01	.03 .76	.16 .09	.07 .44	.48 .00								
Farm size (V11)	r Sig.	.51 .00	.27 .03	.33 .01	.05 .69	.15 .25	.03 .83	.20 .12	-.04 .72	.16 .22	-.06 .66							
MESC (V12)	r Sig.	.01 .90	.08 .41	.03 .77	.06 .53	-.11 .27	.08 .50	.26 .01	.08 .42	.09 .35	.04 .63	.03 .78						
MIP (V13)	r Sig.	-.11 .25	.06 .55	-.02 .98	-.00 .98	-.02 .85	.12 .30	.16 .09	.07 .44	.01 .85	-.01 .95	-.25 .06	.52 .00					
MINST (V14)	r Sig.	-.01 .95	.13 .20	.08 .44	.07 .49	-.21 .04	.16 .18	.03 .76	.00 .99	-.15 .15	-.19 .06	-.09 .49	.58 .00	.48 .00				
VEVAL (V15)	r Sig.	.09 .36	-.00 .97	.06 .55	-.01 .87	.34 .00	.08 .53	.06 .51	-.11 .31	.21 .04	.08 .39	.21 .12	-.06 .55	-.30 .00	-.22 .03			
VPOT (V16)	r Sig.	.14 .18	.08 .40	.02 .83	-.08 .46	.26 .01	.12 .33	-.03 .71	.02 .83	-.05 .58	.13 .57	-.09 .33	-.09 .37	.02 .38	.45 .80	.00 .00		
VACT (V17)	r Sig.	.12 .25	-.02 .80	.02 .81	.01 .92	.42 .00	-.01 .94	.03 .72	-.12 .24	.10 .33	.12 .24	.15 .26	-.00 .98	-.00 .20	-.16 .11	.65 .00	.65 .00	
SCB (V18)	r Sig.	.07 .48	.10 .31	.11 .28	.29 .01	.35 .00	-.12 .33	.20 .05	-.10 .93	.10 .00	.12 .00	.15 .14	-.00 .12	-.10 .32	-.06 .53	.47 .00	.17 .10	.39 .00

Note: Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed); r=Pearson Correlation; Sig.= (2-Tailed)

Seven independent variables were used in the final multiple regression analysis. These factors were: motivation internal self-concept, volunteering evaluative factor, volunteering activity factor, number of Farm Bureau events attended, belong to other organizations, member of other youth development organizations, and participated in leadership development programs. As Table 4-37 indicates, these independent variables have a significant relationship and impact on the dependent variable, participation on local county Farm Bureau boards.

Table 4-37 Regression Analysis with Variables which Made Significant Contributions (N=86)

	df	r	Sig. (2-Tailed)
Motivation Internal Self-Concept	84	.26	.01
Volunteering Evaluative Factor	84	.47	.00
Volunteering Activity Factor	84	.39	.00
Number of Farm Bureau Events Attended	84	.30	.01
Belong to Other Organizations	84	.35	.00
Member of Other Youth Development Organizations	84	.38	.00
Participated in Leadership Development Program	84	.31	.00

Note: Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (p<.05)

In the final multiple regression model, a stepwise backward selection was utilized. Two variables met the removal criterion: belong to other organizations and motivation internal self-concept factor. These two variables did not make a statistical significant contribution to how well the model predicts the dependent variable. The final multiple regression analysis with the remaining five variables is presented in Table 4-38. Why individuals take on additional leadership roles such as serving on their local county Farm Bureau boards is explained by these five variables. As discussed in the literature, how individuals evaluate volunteer opportunities, the volunteer activities they are engaged in, how active they are in the organization (represented by the number of events they attended) and if they have participated in other organizations or leadership development

programs all factor into whether individuals will step forth and assume greater leadership responsibilities.

The adjusted R<sup>2</sup> value (R<sup>2</sup> = .36) describes how much of the variance in the dependent variable (serving on county boards) is explained by the model. The five independent variables that are included account for 36% of the variance. The F-value of 9.96, which was significant at the .05 level, represents the ratio of the improvement in prediction as a result of fitting the model relative to the inaccuracy that still exists in the model (Field, 2000). From this table, “volunteering evaluative factor” has the highest Beta value of .34 and is statistically significant, which indicates the largest explanatory power between this variable and the dependent variable.

Table 4-38 Final Regression Analysis with Variables which Made Significant Contributions (N=86)

	$\beta$	Beta	<i>t</i>	df	Sig.	R <sup>2</sup>	Adj. R <sup>2</sup>
Constant	-.50		-.63	79	.53		
Volunteering Evaluative Factor	.46	.34	2.75	79	.01		
Volunteering Activity Factor	.24	.17	1.43	79	.16		
Number of Farm Bureau Events Attended	.20	.19	1.93	79	.06		
Member of Other Youth Development Organizations	.39	.20	1.86	79	.07		
Participated in Leadership Development Program	.46	.17	1.61	79	.11		
						.40	.36

Note: F=9.96;  $\alpha < .05$

### Summary

This chapter presented the findings of this study, organized in order of the objectives, which were: (1) identify selected demographics of county Farm Bureau membership, (2) identify perceived leadership roles of county Farm Bureau leaders by the state Farm Bureau leadership, (3) measure the extent to which county Farm Bureau members practice the leadership expectations held by state Farm Bureau leaders and the

level of importance they assign to those skills, (4) determine leadership attitude, will, and desire of active Florida Farm Bureau members, and (5) determine reason why local Farm Bureau members chose to participate or not participate in leadership roles in local county Farm Bureau boards.

The next chapter will discuss conclusions and recommendations that were drawn from this study. Recommendations will also be presented.

## CHAPTER 5 SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

The conclusions and recommendations drawn from the findings of this study are found in this chapter. An overview of the study, including the specific research objectives, the methodology used, and findings are provided in the first section of this chapter. The remainder of the chapter focuses on conclusions, implications, and recommendations for further research in this area.

### **Summary of the Study**

#### **Problem Statement**

Developing the full potential of the leadership base in agriculture is extremely important as this industry is facing new challenges it has never confronted such as environmental responsibility, food quality, international competition, taxation, and clarifying its own identity (GALFF, 2002). New technologies, consolidation, environmental concerns and food safety are some of the factors that are contributing to the rapidly changing face of agriculture in the United States (Duffy & Nanhou, 2002). Rapid change is occurring in all segments of society, agriculture included. To keep pace with this change, informed, decisive, and communicative spokespersons are needed to represent agriculture (KARL, 2002).

Organizations can play a significant role by nurturing future leaders. They can provide the education and training necessary for the advancement of leadership among its members (Foster, 2000). Pernick (2001) states there are two advantages of building

leadership talent within an organization. “First, the next generation of leaders is groomed by the organization and can instill the culture and agenda of the organization. Secondly, the organization has greater control over the supply of leaders with the necessary skills, which makes implementation of the organization’s agenda easier and quicker” (p. 429).

The effects of a leadership development program for Farm Bureau members could be far reaching, but before those effects can be felt, desired leadership practices needed to be identified, existing behavior in current leaders needed to be determined, “gaps” between desired practices and existing behavior needed to be identified, current leadership practices needed to be explained and what motivates individuals to take on additional leadership responsibilities needed to be determined.

### **Purpose and Objectives**

The problem identified for this study was: Agriculture in the United States and the state of Florida is rapidly changing. To keep a strong voice and presence at the local, state, and national level, agriculture needs qualified leaders who are willing and able to work on behalf of agriculture and their livelihoods. The question identified was: Why isn’t Farm Bureau more involved in “growing” and retaining leaders for grassroots leadership in their local county farm bureaus. Several reasons are hypothesized: (1) there is a lack of infusion of young member involvement and (2) the attitude/will/desire among Farm Bureau members in taking leadership roles in their local Farm Bureau organizations is unknown.

This study examined these factors and the expectations that the FFBF has of its’ local leaders who are members of county boards. With the data this study provided, the

FFBF can tailor a leadership development program to meet needs of Farm Bureau and Farm Bureau members.

The five objectives of this study were: (1) identify selected demographics of county Farm Bureau membership, (2) identify perceived leadership roles of county Farm Bureau leaders by the state Farm Bureau leadership, (3) measure the extent to which county Farm Bureau members practice the leadership expectations held by state Farm Bureau leaders and the level of importance they assign to those skills, (4) determine leadership attitude, will, and desire of active Florida Farm Bureau members, and (5) determine reason why local Farm Bureau members chose to participate or not participate in leadership roles in local county Farm Bureau boards.

### **Methodology**

The research design of this study was a three-part assessment of the Florida Farm Bureau and its membership using both qualitative and quantitative research methods. The three parts of this study included: (1) a qualitative long interview of members of the state leadership of the FFBF. This interview was the first part of the study and provided the foundation for the leadership competency instrument given to county farm bureau board members. Interview questions included their expectations of desired leadership practices and behaviors of local board members and their expectations of what county farm bureau boards should accomplish, (2) a quantitative survey instrument was developed by the researcher, based upon findings from the qualitative interview and given to a random sample of members of local Farm Bureau boards. This instrument had a list of 66 leadership practices divided into four competence areas, each respondent rated their perceived importance and proficiency of each, and (3) a leadership behavior

instrument developed by the researcher and administered to active Farm Bureau members. This instrument measured respondent attitude/will/desire regarding leadership to determine if leadership apathy exists. Descriptive statistics analyzed the demographic variables of respondents. A demographic section was included at the end of both quantitative instruments to collect personal information about survey respondents. The instruments used in this study were reviewed by a panel of experts and pilot tested with comparable farm bureau groups to ensure reliability and validity.

For this study, one population, the Florida Farm Bureau organization, was used. Three subsets of this population were included in this population. The first subset was the leadership of the FFBF, which included: the president of the board of directors, administrative and legal counsel, director of the agricultural policy division, director of public relations, the vice president of the board of directors, the coordinator of national affairs, and the executive director of the Dade County Farm Bureau. These individuals participated in the first part of this study, individual interviews using a long interview format.

The second subset of the population was composed of members of local county farm bureau boards. A sample of this sub-population was administered the survey that was derived from the responses to the interview questionnaires given to the first group of respondents.

The third subset of the population was a sample of active Florida Farm Bureau members. This group received the third instrument used in this study, a leadership behavior instrument which was composed of three parts: a motivation sources inventory,

a semantic differential scale about volunteering, and a Likert scale inventory on respondents' views about serving on a county board. Demographic information was collected in this survey as well as the survey that was completed by the county farm bureau board members.

Various methods of data collection and analyses were conducted in this study. Responses from the long interviews were analyzed through content analysis. The analysis conducted identified themes in the responses that were subsequently used in the development of the competencies used in the survey instrument given to local county board members. The information provided by this content analysis was used in objective three; identify perceived leadership roles of county farm bureau leaders by the state farm bureau leadership.

Data analysis of the two survey instruments was used to explain and predict leader involvement. The demographic information collected from both surveys was used to accomplish the first research objective, identify demographics of county farm bureau members. Independent variables such as age, gender, years of membership in farm bureau, membership in other agricultural organizations, membership in other organizations, marital status, children, membership in youth and leadership development programs, agricultural income, and farm size were analyzed. Selected independent variables were used with other data as predictors of participation on county farm bureau boards.

The leadership competency instrument that was developed for county board members was used to accomplish objective three, measure the extent to which county farm bureau members practice the leadership expectations held by state farm bureau

leaders. This instrument was comprised of four competency sections: (1) 15 leadership, (2) 20 political process, (3) 15 effective boards, and (4) 16 knowledge of farm bureau.

The mean and standard deviation was calculated for the importance and proficiency of each competency section.

Objective four, determine leadership attitude, will, and desire of active Florida farm bureau members was accomplished by analyzing the data of each section of the instrument. A mean and standard deviation was found for the motivation sources inventory and the semantic differential. A reliability analysis was conducted on the Likert-scale about serving on county boards.

Multiple regression was used to accomplish objective five, explain why local farm bureau members chose to participate or not participate in leadership roles in local county farm bureau boards. For this analysis, the dependent variable is participation on a county board, and the independent variables are: the four motivation factors from the motivation sources inventory, the three factors on volunteering from the semantic differential, attitude about serving on a county board, and the demographic variables found at the end of the survey instrument.

## **Findings**

A summary of the findings of this study are presented in relation to the objectives of the study.

### **Objective One**

The first objective of this study sought to identify the demographics of county Farm Bureau membership. Of the 129 board members who responded to this survey,

88.4% were male and 11.6% were female. For the active survey, 69% were male and 31% were female.

Married board members made up 86% of the board member population. Of the active members who participated in the study, 68.3% were married. Large percentages of both groups had children, 93.8% for board members and 84.2% for active members.

Those who serve on Farm Bureau boards have been a Farm Bureau member for an average of 21.4 years. The average number of years in Farm Bureau for active members who completed this survey was 14.5 years.

The involvement of the respondents family in Farm Bureau was also examined with 73.4% of board members indicating that they were part of another generation of Farm Bureau as their family had been involved in Farm Bureau, while only 17% of active members indicated that their family was involved in Farm Bureau.

On average, Farm Bureau board members spend 8.4 hours per month on Farm Bureau activities, which includes participating in meetings, activities, events and conventions and reading information in support of these activities. Active members spend considerably less time than board members, only a quarter of an hour per month on average.

County board members have served an average of 11.5 years on their county boards. One-third of county board members have served as president of their county Farm Bureau board 33.6%. Only 7.8% of board members have been on the board of the state Farm Bureau organization.

Board members seem to be more active in other organizations 71.4% than do active members 10%. Of those board members who were involved in other agricultural

organizations, 42.1% held leadership roles in these organizations, while only 4% of active members held leadership positions. Both groups are involved with other civic, community, or business organizations, 63.8% of board members and 42.6% of active members.

The mean ages for both groups are approximately equivalent, 51.4 years for board members and 50.9 years for active members. Close to fifty percent of active members, 48.5% are between 43 to 60 years old, while 33% of board members fall within this age range.

There were 42.6% of board members who belonged to 4-H, while 21.8% of active members were involved in the 4-H program. Almost half, 45.7% of board members belonged to FFA, while only 12.9% of active members belonged to this organization. Approximately the same percentage of each group, 34.6% of board members and 34.7% of active members, belonged to other youth development organizations.

Respondents derived their agricultural income from the following sources: aquaculture, dairy, forestry, grain, livestock, poultry, tobacco, citrus, equine, fruit, horticulture, peanuts, sugarcane, vegetables, and other (such as hay, sod, chemicals, sales). The average size of a board members farm was 1,778.1 acres while the average farm of an active member was 398.1 acres. The final demographic characteristic that was reported was that, less than half of board members work off farm 44.2%, while 65.1% of active members are employed off the farm which could indicates that more active members derive their income from outside pursuits.

## **Objective Two**

The second research objective attempted to identify perceived leadership roles of county Farm Bureau leaders by the state Farm Bureau leadership. From the interview questionnaire, four themes emerged: leadership, political process, effective boards, and knowledge of Farm Bureau. These were all areas that the state leadership determined county Farm Bureau board members should possess skills. In the leadership theme area, there were fifteen leadership competencies that state leaders thought were important for county Farm Bureau members to possess. In the political process area, twenty competencies emerged from responses to the qualitative instrument. Fifteen effective board member competencies were developed from responses to the interview questionnaire, and sixteen composed the section on the knowledge of Farm Bureau.

The competencies were derived from analysis of the interview responses. They evolved from the responses to the interview questions given by the interview respondents, responses for each question were grouped together and then divided into the four theme areas. Duplicate responses were eliminated and several were combined. After pilot testing, several competencies were removed which were confusing or did not contribute statistically to the scale.

## **Objective Three**

Objective three measured the extent to which county Farm Bureau members practice the leadership expectations held by state Farm Bureau leaders and the importance they place on each. This was done by designing a scale, which asked the respondent to rate the importance of each competency and their proficiency at each. A quantitative instrument was developed using the competencies that emerged from the

interviews with state officials and was divided into the same four theme areas.

Respondents were asked to rate the importance and their proficiency in each competency.

The overall means for each section were compared, the means of the importance sections are greater than the means for the proficiency sections. The largest “gap” between importance and proficiency occurred in the political process section, with importance rated 5.5 and proficiency 4.7.

#### **Objective Four**

Objective four attempted to determine leadership attitude, will, and desire of active Florida Farm Bureau members. The survey questionnaire given to active members was divided into three sections to address the three components of this objective, the survey respondents’ attitude, will, and desire. A semantic differential scale was developed and included to measure the attitudes that active members have towards volunteering. A Likert-type scale measured the will that active members possess in regards toward serving on their local county Farm Bureau boards. The third section of this survey questionnaire attempted to quantify the motivations of individuals and provide a measurement of the desire respondents have towards volunteering using a motivation sources inventory.

From the three parts of this questionnaire, it was found that respondents were motivated by internal self-concept factors. These are factors which make up the basis of an individual’s ideal self and drives them to take action. Respondents had a positive attitude towards volunteering when they ranked those volunteer opportunities high on an evaluative scale. The final part of this survey, the section on “Serving on County Boards” found that individuals ranked “I am satisfied with the Farm Bureau organization

and it's goals" as the highest, which could be a reason why individuals serve on their local county Farm Bureau board.

### **Objective Five**

The final objective of this study explained why local Farm Bureau members chose to participate or not participate in leadership roles in local county Farm Bureau boards. To accomplish this objective, stepwise, backward multiple regression was used. Twenty-four independent variables were used in this regression model. Five independent variables, the volunteering evaluative factor, volunteering activity factor, number of Farm Bureau events attended, member of other youth development organizations, and participation in leadership development programs were used in the final multiple regression analysis. In this analysis, the only factor which was statistically significant was the volunteering evaluative factor, which would indicate that individuals are more likely to accept additional leadership responsibilities such as serving on their local county Farm Bureau board if they place a high evaluative factor on serving on the board.

### **Conclusions**

This study provides valuable information to the FFBF on the leadership perceptions and expectations of Florida Farm Bureau members. The generalizability of the conclusions and recommendations proposed in this study extends to the FFBF and the county Farm Bureaus in Florida. The information provided in this study could be useful to other Farm Bureau organizations in the United States as they are organizations who are composed of the same types of individuals and are organizationally structured the same.

Findings from this study can be applied to the Florida Farm Bureau population, even with response rates that could be perceived low in some research communities. To

defend this return rate, Hager, Wilson, Pollak, and Rooney (in press) determined that surveys of organizations typically receive substantially lower return rates, with a return rate of 15% reaching a level of acceptability for organizational surveys. In a study by Green and Hutchinson (1997) on the *Effects of Population Type on Mail Survey Response Rates and on the Efficacy of Response Enhancers*, the authors found that the response rate for those involved in agriculture was 30%, while the general public had a return rate of 35%. For the three sub populations who participated in this study, the response rates were as follows: 100% for state Farm Bureau officials, 46% for county board members, and 25% for active board members.

It could be theorized that county board members returned a greater percentage of surveys because they had more of a vested interest in the organization and believed that results from this study would benefit their county organizations. As one county board member stated on their returned survey, "I appreciate the progressive attitude of Florida Farm Bureau and the realization that we must seek input from all stakeholders if we are to serve the industry and maintain a resource for industry leaders."

Another reason why Farm Bureau members may or may not have completed their surveys is due to their frustrations with their local county Farm Bureau boards, which could either lead them to complete the survey in the hopes it would lead to changes, or not complete it due to believing that their opinion really did not matter. Another comment to this effect was found on a returned board members survey, "Many of my county's board meetings are poorly attended and very poorly run. I consider my local organization to be generally ineffective in advancing goals of Farm Bureau. More mature, seasoned leadership is needed to improve organizational effectiveness. I've been

very disappointed during my tenure as a county board member!” This comment adds credence to this study as findings may lead to leadership programming for Farm Bureau members, which may make them more effective on their county boards.

Early and late respondents of both quantitative survey instruments were compared to determine if there were differences between those who responded early and late to the surveys as late responders are often similar to nonrespondents (Ary, Jacobs & Razavieh, 1996). There were no significant differences found in the independent variables examined, age, gender, years in Farm Bureau, marital status, children and years on their county Farm Bureau board (for board members), which would allow the assumption to be made that the respondents are an representative sample of the population and that the findings can be generalized to the whole group.

Specific conclusions and research implications from this research will be reported in the order of the objectives that they were derived from.

### **Objective 1 – Identify Demographics of County Farm Bureau Membership**

Men composed a greater percentage of Farm Bureau membership (80%). For board members, 88.4% were men, which reflect the Farm Bureau percentage that was reported for the gender of Farm Bureau members. More men tend to be leaders in grassroots organizations than women (Smith, 2000). For the active survey, one-third (31%) were women, as Eisinger (2002) explained, the board of an organization should reflect the makeup of the membership, which includes people of different backgrounds, ethnicities, ages, and interest. If the board has been homogeneous in the past, it needs to broaden its horizons and welcome new ideas that emerge from interactions among different groups, such as gender.

From the interviews of the state leaders though, more women and individuals who represent smaller segments of agriculture (such as organic growers), need to be included on county Farm Bureau boards, as the populations they represent are increasing in numbers and their diverse backgrounds and knowledge would be beneficial to their local county Farm Bureau boards. This is further shown in the size of the operations between the county board members and active members, with active members having, on average, smaller operations. These individuals may not have a large agricultural presence in their county, but they are still involved in agriculture and should be considered for their local county Farm Bureau board.

Seventy-eight percent of the total population (board and active members) were married and over ninety percent had children. From the literature, family status is an important determinant in the decision to volunteer. As Safrit and Merrill (2002) stated, organizations need to find ways to structure volunteer work which will allow people increased flexibility to move in and out of volunteering as work and family pressures affect their lives. Farm Bureau needs to take this into account and realize that Farm Bureau members have busy lives with children and the fact that approximately half of the survey respondents work off farm. These are busy individuals who do not have large amounts of time to devote to serving on their county Farm Bureau boards. The needs of today's time-crunched members, such as shorter-term commitments, may require associations to examine their traditional notions of volunteer service and how to attract those members to leadership positions (Eisinger, 2002, p. 5).

One of the reasons why active members are not taking on additional responsibilities such as serving on their local county Farm Bureau board could be

because the active members do not identify with the current leadership of their county Farm Bureaus. When there is no identification with a group, if an individual believes that the organization does not represent their interests or if an individual is content and does not feel the need to participate then they may become apathetic. There is a connection between contentment and apathy as a content person may become lulled into apathy over time after deciding that withdrawing from an activity will not seriously jeopardize his or her future wants or needs, and thereby future contentment (DeLuca, 1995).

County board members were more likely to have had family involvement in Farm Bureau (73.4%), while only a small percentage of active members had this family tradition (17%). As one state official stated “some members have grown up in Farm Bureau, they start attending Farm Bureau conventions as children, so being a Farm Bureau member when they are grown is a natural occurrence.” Family involvement may account for board members having more of an identity with the organization. As agriculture and the demographics of the State of Florida changes in the future, Farm Bureau needs to increase their identification with their members and potential members as less and less will have a family history with the organization. Farm Bureau needs to start this process of creating organizational identification with its members immediately, especially with the changes of agriculture that are occurring.

The mean age for county Farm Bureau members was approximately 50 years old. Those members who are in the younger age range (19 to 42 years old) account for close to one-third of Farm Bureau members. Getting younger individuals involved in Farm Bureau and serving on their county Farm Bureau boards was a problem echoed by a majority of the state officials interviewed for this study. Increasing the organizational

identity with members, providing specific leadership opportunities and leadership development training, and providing a job description for county board members when they are elected to their boards could all increase participation of individuals in Farm Bureau on county boards.

Farm Bureau members who responded to this survey were over 42 years old (67% board, 73% active), which would indicate that the older members of the organization are interested enough in the organization to complete the survey that was mailed to them. Again, this demographic needs to be considered as younger individuals will need to be recruited so as to represent all ages of the Farm Bureau population. Young people will be needed to continue the work of the county and state Farm Bureau organizations.

Several state officials stated that a concern of the county boards was that the older board members impeded the ideas of newer members and limited the progressiveness of county boards as they “want to do things the way they’ve always been done.” The demographics in this study show that 42.1% of board members actually have the least tenure on the board (0.5 to 5 years) and board members who have been on the board fifteen or more years account for one quarter of the board member population.

A large percentage of board members (71.4%) were also involved in other agricultural organizations, while a large percentage of active members (90%) were not. One could conclude that board members were “joiners” and active in the organizations that represented their interests. It could be theorized that being active in all these organizations could hamper their effectiveness as board members due to all the pressures on their time. Conversely, those who belong to organizations, especially agricultural organizations that represent their industry interests are more likely to join additional

organizations. These organizations also provide social identity and social capital to their participants.

Results from the literature found that involved members belonged to organizations almost as twice as long as those members who were not as involved in organizations. Involved members (such as board members) witnessed the effects of their efforts, witnessed organizational success and achieved a level of personal accomplishment; they believed they could make a difference. For those that were not as involved (or who do not participate on county boards), the potential benefits and outcomes may have been important but unknown. (Martinez & McMullin, 2004). Board members have been members of Florida Farm Bureau for 21.4 years, while active members only 14.5 years, those who participate on county boards have been members of the organization longer and have a greater organizational commitment.

Volunteers demand training from their organizations. Traditionally, training programs for volunteers have focused on specific subject matter, organizational, or interpersonal skills. They must also include components that challenge volunteers to develop important thinking and processing skills (Safrit & Jones, 2003). Several state officials stated the need for job descriptions for county board members so they knew exactly what was expected of them during their tenure on the board.

Over 50% of board members had farms of 100 or more acres, again which reiterates the notion that those with smaller acreages are not as represented on county boards, as over 70% of active members had farms with ten acres or less. The FFBF needs to realize that the number of active members from small farms, also called “hobby” farms and “part-time” farms is increasing. In Florida, there is a trend of the growth of

smaller farms. There were 44,000 farms in Florida in 2002, the largest number of farms, 18,335, is those that are 10 to 49 acres in size (USDA, 2004).

The average size farm for board members was 1,778.1 acres, while for active members it was 398.1 acres. The median (or the point where 50% of the cases fall below) for board members is 300 acres, while only 2.05 acres for active members. One could conclude that “farm size” equals “leadership” exemplified by these numbers. The FFBF needs to consider these numbers carefully as an overwhelming percentage (72.4%) of active members only have farms which range in size from 0 to 10 acres. This group needs greater representation on their local county Farm Bureau boards as this group is increasing in farm numbers (USDA, 2004).

It should be noted that only 56 active members responded to the farm income and farm size questions on the survey instrument. Two conclusions could be derived from this lack of response for these questions: 1) it could have been an error in instrumentation, or 2) individuals did not complete this section because they do not have farm income.

From the demographic information and from the recent trends in agriculture (more small part-time farms) the membership of Farm Bureau is changing and the Farm Bureau organization needs to recognize these changes and implement measures to address them. An organization’s choice not to innovate or change with the times is the largest reason for its decline. Organizational performance is measured by its development of its people, its standing, innovation, and its productivity. Changes in population structure and population dynamics are important trends to watch in the future of organizations as these trends will be the cause of an organization to evolve. The

populations that comprise the memberships of organizations are changing and no longer remain as constant as they once did (Drucker, 2001).

**Objective 2 – Identify Perceived Leadership Roles of County Farm Bureau Leaders by the State Farm Bureau Leadership**

From the qualitative instrument and the seven interview respondents, it was determined that county Farm Bureau board members needed leadership skills, political process skills, effective board member skills, and knowledge of Farm Bureau skills. These four theme areas “easily” shook out from the content analysis of these interviews. Each interview echoed the previous and most of the competencies were stated by a majority of the interview respondents. Of the 100 competencies that were described as important for county board members to possess, 66 were used for the quantitative instrument given to county board members. The largest group was in the political process section, which makes sense as policy development is one of the biggest objectives and concerns of the FFBF.

One of the most apparent conclusions for this objective is that there is agreement on behalf of the state leadership of the FFBF of what the leadership roles and expectations of county board members should be.

In the section on leadership, respondents felt that involvement in leadership opportunities, identifying potential leaders, recognizing different types of leaders, leadership styles, and personality differences were all important aspects of leadership. The ability to conduct a meeting, work with small groups, build consensus, use conflict resolution practices and the ability to not do things the way they had always been done were all necessary for leaders in county Farm Bureaus. Communication skills from using the internet to public speaking were also deemed extremely important.

All aspects of the political process from the county, state, and national level were emphasized by all those interviewed for the qualitative portion of this study. Analyzing issues, policy formation, developing relationships with officials at all levels, and supporting Farm Bureau legislative activities need to be understood and participated in by local county board members.

Participating in Farm Bureau programs and events and all aspects that are conducive to an effective board were detailed in the section on effective boards. Farm Bureau officials felt it was necessary to include this section to incorporate all the items that comprise an effective board.

A knowledge of the FFBF, grassroots organizations, the AFBF, and individuals' roles in each are all components of an effective board member. The state organization needs to make sure that incoming board members are provided this knowledge when they begin their service on their boards.

**Objective 3 – Measure the Extent to Which County Farm Bureau Members Practice the Leadership Expectations Held by State Farm Bureau Leaders and the Level of Importance they Assign to Those Skills**

Conclusions from this section are based on the differences between the level of importance assigned to competencies and the level of proficiency (or if they are practicing these skills). For the first section on leadership competencies, the mean of the importance scores is only slightly more than the mean of the proficiency scores ( $M=5.4$ ,  $M=5.0$ ) which indicates that board members feel they are as proficient in the competency as they deem it important. A proficiency level of 5.0 would still indicate that there is a learning curve and members would benefit from additional training in these competency areas, especially those with the lowest proficiency scores, such as: recognizing

personality differences and the ability to use email and the internet, two competencies that were considered important by state officials. Proficiency scores were also low in communication skills (working with the media, writing letters, working with groups) which also indicates that additional training would be beneficial in these areas as county Farm Bureau members are suppose to be the spokespeople for Farm Bureau on the county level.

The proficiency scores for the political process section were the lowest for the four theme areas ( $M=4.7$ ). None of the competencies was higher then 5.1 and one ranked 3.9, a score that would reflect a very low proficiency level. This area is crucial for Farm Bureau as it is a policy development organization and its members need to be comfortable and knowledgeable about the policy development process. Farm Bureau needs to do more work in this area and educate county Farm Bureau board members in policy development and the political process. Farm Bureau also needs to do more to encourage county board member involvement in the legislative activities. Several state officials described the most important duty of a board member was to be politically active, Farm Bureau needs to provide the tools and skills necessary to accomplish this task.

The mean scores for the effective boards section were extremely close ( $M_{Importance}=6.1$ ,  $M_{Proficiency}=6.0$ ) and relatively high, an indication that county board members felt the competencies were important and that they were proficient in each. Results of this section are questionable as several state officials noted that members of county boards were not working together effectively, which cause the board to not be as successful as it could be. Even one county board member stated that meetings “were

more poorly run and poorly lead committees or board meetings I have served on.” One reason for the high scores in this area could be that those board members who completed the survey belonged to the more effective county Farm Bureau organizations, an indication of this would be that members are willing to take the time to complete the survey which means that they have a vested interest in the board and a desire to make it even better. Even though board members ranked this section fairly high, it could still be recommended that board members need additional training on how to be an effective board member. Eisinger (2002) states that much of leadership training needs to be directed towards those volunteers who are serving on organizational boards as they sometimes lack the necessary skills to be effective board members.

The final section of competencies, those that dealt with a knowledge of Farm Bureau ranked fairly low in the proficiency area as well ( $M=4.9$ ). Results from this section showed a low proficiency in identifying the history of Farm Bureau, knowledge of the FFBF and the AFBF, and the ability to distinguish how the policy development process differs in Farm Bureau from other organizations (top down versus grassroots).

The survival of institutions depends on the capacity of “leaders to develop and maintain organizational cultures that foster and sustain autonomy and independence while strengthening the ability of individuals to care for and commit to the organization and the larger community” (Scott, 2000, p. 13). In order to care for and commit to the organization, Farm Bureau members need to understand why Farm Bureau was formed, how it is organized and how they, as county board members fit into the organization. Basic knowledge of the history of Farm Bureau, the structure of Farm Bureau on the

local, state, and national level, and grassroots organizations is needed for county board members.

**Objective 4 – Determine Leadership Attitude, Will, and Desire of Active Florida Farm Bureau Members**

Results from the Motivation Sources Inventory showed that active Farm Bureau members are more motivated by internal standards of traits and values that individuals impose on themselves. They are not motivated by seeking the acceptance of others or by whether or not the volunteer opportunity is enjoyable. Instrumental motivation scores were in the middle and would indicate that some active members are motivated by rewards, incentives, and bonuses.

Internal self-concept motivation, which received the highest scores on this inventory, are individual sets of internal standards that become the basis for the ideal self and is motivated to engage in behaviors that reinforce these standards (Barbuto et al., 2001). This is important, as a majority of responses from state officials indicated that people agree to serve on their Farm Bureau board because they were asked by other board members or a field staff person. With the results from this inventory, it would appear that this external self-concept motivation, or gaining the acceptance from other group members is not as important to individuals.

Farm Bureau should make serving on county farm bureau boards appealing to individuals on a personal level. They should believe that their participation will add value to their lives, give them a sense of personal achievement and that the organization they volunteer for allows them to use their skills and talents. This sentiment is echoed by one-third of state officials who were interviewed and stated that Farm Bureau needed to

find out member's skills and provide them opportunities to use these skills for the benefit of the organization.

Results from the semantic differential scale on attitudes towards volunteering showed that active Farm Bureau members place a high value on the volunteer activity and how they evaluate this activity. Activities that had positive or high evaluative terms are more appealing to individuals. Farm Bureau should make the volunteer experience a positive one for its members, as if they feel it is uninteresting or unimportant they are less likely to participate.

From this analysis, it could also be concluded that Farm Bureau members want to be active; they want to accomplish something and derive more satisfaction in volunteer activities that allow them to do this. For those individuals who participated in volunteer activities, they witnessed the effects of their efforts, witnessed organizational success and achieved a level of personal accomplishment; they believed they could make a difference. (Martinez & McMullin, 2004).

The "will" of active members to increase their level of participation in the Farm Bureau organization was quantified by a scale that had twelve items relating to serving on a county board. The highest ranking item on this scale was a satisfaction with the Farm Bureau organization and its goals, and the lowest ranking items had to do with feeling that it was their turn to serve on their board and wanting to be recognized for being on the board. This result is congruent with the results from the motivation sources inventory that found Farm Bureau members are not motivated by external sources, such as recognition from others or that such a small percentage of active members had family involved in the Farm Bureau organization. The reason why "family members have

served on the board and now it's my turn" could have ranked low is because a small percentage of active members who completed this survey had family members who belonged to Farm Bureau.

Being satisfied with the organization and its goals is reflected in the work by Bolman and Deal (1997) on organizational frames which make an effective organization. The structural frame emphasizes the organizations' goals, roles and relationships. Problems in organizations occur when the structure does not fit the situation. The challenge is to tailor the organization to the people who work within it. Organizations need to find a way for individuals to get the job done, while feeling good about what they are doing and feel that the organization's goals are congruent with their own.

#### **Objective 5 – Determine Reason why Local Farm Bureau Members Chose to Participate or not Participate in Leadership Roles in Local County Farm Bureau Boards**

Results from this objective were interesting yet did not provide additional support for the literature on why people chose to participate or not participate, in this case participation on their local county Farm Bureau boards. In the multiple regression analysis, how individuals evaluate volunteering is a factor was the strongest determinant whether they volunteer for additional leadership responsibilities in the Farm Bureau organization such as serving on county boards. Other factors which accounted for participation on county boards included: volunteering activity factor, Farm Bureau events attended, member in other youth organizations, and participation in leadership development programs. Being involved in youth organizations may serve to encourage future participation in organizations as adults, especially if the membership was a positive experience. A longitudinal analysis was completed on the characteristics of

membership of voluntary organizations, “these characteristics are: (a) memberships over time are relatively stable, (b) most individuals will add and drop memberships in organizations over time but maintain at least one continuous membership, and (c) the occurrence of affiliation changes influence the structure and function of association” (Martinez & McMullin, 2004, p. 114). The fact that most individuals will add and drop memberships in organizations over time may add the importance of serving in increased capacities as many individuals join an organization, work into leadership roles and once they serve in those roles, they then gradually remove themselves from the organization.

Though the literature provided evidence that family status, gender and age were all variables that influenced volunteering; these factors were not found to be significant for this study and whether individuals will participate on their local county boards. These variables still need to be considered as important reasons why individuals chose to take on additional responsibilities within the Farm Bureau organization. The literature also described the importance of motivation and why volunteers chose to participate in organizations and volunteer opportunities. In the regression model used for this analysis, the four motivation factors were eliminated and were not included in the final analysis. This could be due to a problem with the instrument used in this study.

### **Recommendations**

One of the fastest ways to build leadership in an organization is to train the membership. Leadership development programs that aid in the assurance of an adequate supply of effective leaders are a vital and continuing need in communities and organizations across the United States (Rohs & Langone, 1993). Leadership development builds the capacity of local leaders and citizens. This means enhancing the

potential of individuals to solve problems. It is done by engaging citizens and organizations to identify needs, resources, and opportunities (Hustedde & Woodward, 1996).

This study identified the needs of Florida Farm bureau members in regards to potential leadership training that could be provided by the Florida Farm Bureau Federation. From the four theme areas developed from the interviews with the state leadership, the following competencies had the greatest gaps between importance and knowledge and should be included in leadership programming:

1. Use effective communication skills in media interviews
2. Use effective communication skills in letter writing
3. Demonstrate ability to conduct an orderly meeting
4. Use effective communication skills in working with groups
5. Develop relationships with elected officials on the national level
6. Identify the political structure in Washington, D.C.
7. Participate in state government meetings impacting agriculture
8. Develop relationships with officials on the state level
9. Represent Farm Bureau to others in the community
10. Participate in Farm Bureau sponsored programs
11. The importance of attending meetings
12. Demonstrate ability to work together to develop the goals necessary to achieve the vision of the organization
13. Importance of participating in media and farm tours
14. Demonstrate a knowledge of the FFBF
15. Demonstrate a knowledge of the AFBF.

The largest gaps were found in the political process theme area and the competencies included in this area should all be considered for a leadership-training program.

This training should be provided to current and incoming county Farm Bureau board members. In addition to this training, Farm Bureau should provide county board members with a job description so they know exactly what being a county Farm Bureau board member entails. As one state official commented “the problem is that the organization never got around to doing a job description, what knowledge is needed to get the job (being an effective county board member) done.”

Another recommendation would be to provide county board members with a handbook that provides much of this knowledge, such as the history and organization of Farm Bureau on all levels, the policy development process, and the political structure at various levels (such as in Tallahassee, FL and Washington, D.C.)

“The Florida Farm Bureau needs to recognize that agriculture is evolving into non-traditional types of farming in urbanizing counties and become more pro-active in supporting and including new forms of agriculture as they emerge.” This was a comment provided by a county board member on their completed survey and one that needs to be supported at all levels of Farm Bureau from the county to the state organization.

Agriculture is changing and Farm Bureau needs to bring individuals to the table that represent these non-traditional types of farming as they represent the future of agriculture and for Florida Farm Bureau to continue to play a role in Florida agriculture they need to practice the progressiveness that it is encouraging in its members.

In addition to the changing demographics in rural communities and a changing constituency that Farm Bureau represents, the Farm Bureau organization itself needs to be examined as organizations today are different than the organizations that were formed almost a century ago, such as Farm Bureau.

Florida Farm Bureau also should understand the motivations of its' volunteer members to retain the membership levels of its active members. As volunteers are the backbone of this organization, there is a great need for the retainment and recruitment of new volunteers for the organization. Additional research could be conducted in this area to determine exactly what motivates individuals to accept great responsibilities in Farm Bureau.

### **Suggestions for Further Research**

This study could be the starting point for additional leadership research within the FFBF. Results from the qualitative questionnaire given to state leaders of the FFBF indicated that county board members needed specific leadership skills and abilities to be effective board members. If leadership programming was developed and made available to county board members, an experimental research design could be implemented to determine board members' leadership skills before they participated in such a program and after program completion.

County Farm Bureau board members ranked themselves fairly high in proficiency for all the competencies in the "Effective Board" theme area. The state leadership would probably disagree with their high perceived proficiencies in this area as the lack of proficiencies were determined in the interviews. Additional research is necessary to assess the proficiencies of board members in regards to items listed in this theme area.

The leadership styles of county board members could be another area of research as this study did not attempt to discover what types of leaders county Farm Bureau members were and it would be an interesting and insightful study due to the age ranges of board members. This study could also include the leadership styles of members of the state Farm Bureau board and the officials of the FFBF.

Organizations and the boards that guide their direction are changing due to the motivations of the members that volunteer for the organization and who the organization serves. The FFBF uses boards on the county and state level and could provide valuable research on organizational boards and specifically what motivates board members to participate. Information on organizational boards and the motivations of board members is lacking and Farm Bureau could be an indispensable source of this information.

Current research on grassroots organizations such as Farm Bureau is also lacking. Policy development in Farm Bureau could be examined using the framework of grassroots organizing to add to the body of literature on this form of constituent organizing. A study which undertook this research problem would also add to the knowledge base on the motivations of individuals who belong to grassroots organizations. One of the reasons this study would be of particular importance is that individuals usually join grassroots organizations because of a specific problem and once that has been addressed, their participation ends. Because Farm Bureau requires continuous participation from its members, especially those that serve on the county boards, it would be interesting to find what sustains their membership and involvement.

Another deficit in the literature is current research on agricultural organizations. With the number of agricultural organizations in the United States, it would seem that

there would be studies on these organizations such as: organizational composition, leadership, changes in agriculture, changes in membership (diversity), policy development, etc. A study could be conducted comparing the FFBF with a state agricultural organization such as the FFVA in regards to their membership characteristics, their perceived power and influence in policy making, the policy development process, and the leadership styles of the individual leaders of both organizations, just to identify a few.

Three demographic questions that were asked on the two survey instruments given to county board and active Farm Bureau members asked if respondents had been members of 4-H, FFA, or other youth leadership organizations and results indicated that close to half of those who responded had belonged to either 4-H, FFA, or other youth development organizations. It would be interesting to continue this line of research and investigate the influence of these organizations on leaders. Those who had participated in such organizations could be compared to those who have not and differences noted. This research suggestion was instigated by a participant in the pilot test for the qualitative instrument who stated that the county board members in their state who had belonged to either 4-H or FFA were moving up through the leadership ranks quicker because of the background and leadership training that was provided by these organizations.

### **Summary**

This study attempted to explain the leadership expectations and perceptions of Florida Farm Bureau members. With the findings of this study, Florida Farm Bureau has an increased knowledge of the demographic characteristics of both board and county board members. Changes in several demographic attributes such as age, farm size,

organizational participation, and family involvement in Farm Bureau will all need to be considered by state Farm Bureau officials.

State Farm Bureau officials identified approximately 66 competencies that county Farm Bureau board members should possess in order to be an effective member of their county board. These competencies were divided into four sections: leadership, political process, effective boards, and knowledge of Farm Bureau. County board members rated the importance and their proficiency of each. Gaps between importance and knowledge were determined and examined as areas for programming efforts.

Why its members chose to take on additional leadership responsibilities such as serving on their county boards, their attitudes towards volunteering and the factors that motivate Farm Bureau members were examined through various scales and inventories. Motivations and attitudes towards volunteering are important to determine to best tailor volunteering efforts using the most effective motivators.

Information provided in this study will allow the FFBF to tailor programming efforts on leadership development, in the hopes to “grow” a greater pool of leaders for Florida Farm Bureau and the agricultural industry.

## APPENDIX A

### LETTER TO FLORIDA FARM BUREAU OFFICIALS

Date

Name

Title

Florida Farm Bureau

Address 1

City, State, Postal Code

Dear Name,

As part of my graduate work at the University of Florida, I will be conducting a study tentatively titled “A Comparison of Leadership Expectations and Performances of Florida Farm Bureau Members.” This study will be conducted in three phases, with the first phase being interviews of the state leadership of the Florida Farm Bureau Federation on their expectations of members of local county Farm Bureau boards.

You have been identified as a member of the state leadership for the Florida Farm Bureau Federation and your help with this phase of my study is crucial to the success of my research. Findings from my dissertation will provide the Florida Farm Bureau Federation with information on the leadership expectations and needs of its’ members.

I have included a copy of the questionnaire that I will be using during my interviews of the state leaders for your review. I will contact you within the next week to set up a time that is convenient for you to have me come to your office to conduct my interview, which should take no longer then an hour.

Thank you for your time and consideration of my interview request. If you have any questions, please contact me at (352) 392-1038 or [hscarter@mail.ifas.ufl.edu](mailto:hscarter@mail.ifas.ufl.edu).

Sincerely,

Hannah Carter  
Department of Agricultural Education  
and Communication  
University of Florida

**APPENDIX B**  
**SECOND LETTER TO FLORIDA FARM BUREAU OFFICIALS**

Date

Name

Title

Florida Farm Bureau

Address 1

City, State Postal Code

Dear Name,

This letter is a follow-up to one I sent last week in regards to the study I am conducting on leadership perceptions and expectations of Florida Farm Bureau members. As I stated in the letter, the first phase of my study will be to interview members of the state Farm Bureau leadership using the questionnaire that I included in your letter. I have also requested interviews with other leaders of state organization.

I would like to conduct your interview at your earliest possible convenience as the interviews are the basis of my research and the first part of my study. Please let me know your availability and I will certainly work around your schedule. Again, these interviews should not take more than an hour of your time.

Sincerely,

Hannah Carter  
Department of Agricultural Education  
and Communication  
University of Florida

## APPENDIX C

### INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR FLORIDA FARM BUREAU OFFICIALS

#### Leadership:

1. What leadership skills do you expect county board members to have?
2. If a leadership-training program was offered to county board members, what should be included in the content of this program?
3. How does FB encourage young farmers to take on leadership roles and responsibilities such as serving on county boards?
4. What does the state organization need to do to prepare FB members for additional leadership roles?

#### Boards:

5. What do you believe makes an effective county board?
6. How are potential board members identified in the counties? How are they then approached by FB for their consideration of serving on their county board?
7. What specific objectives would you like county boards to accomplish?
8. What is the role of the county boards in the state FB organization?
9. What activities should the county boards be engaged in?

#### Members:

10. What motivates board members to take a more active role in the county boards or to even what motivates FB members to want to serve on a county board?
11. What kind of preparation or training is currently provided for new board members?
12. How are new board members acclimated to the board?
13. What are the most important duties of a county board member?

#### Organization:

14. What knowledge do county board members need to have about the American Farm Bureau organization, the state Farm Bureau Federation, and grassroots organizations in general? Do most county members have this knowledge?
15. What are the future needs of Farm Bureau in regards to county boards and their involvement?

APPENDIX D  
SURVEY FOR COUNTY BOARD MEMBERS

*Florida Farm Bureau  
Leadership Survey for  
County Board Members*



*Please return your completed questionnaire  
in the enclosed envelope to:*

*Hannah Carter  
1928 SW 42<sup>nd</sup> Dr. #E  
Gainesville, FL 32607*

Please rate (1=low; 7=high) how **important** you believe it is for an ideal county Farm Bureau board member to possess the following abilities and how **proficient** you are (1=low, 7=high) at each.

(Example: 1 2 3 4 **5** 6 7 Support the organization. 1 2 **3** 4 5 6 7)

<b>This ability is important:</b>	<b>LEADERSHIP</b>	<b>My proficiency is:</b>
1) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Demonstrate success in leadership capacities.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Identify potential leaders.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Recognize different types of leadership.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Recognize personality difference (as indicated by personality tests such as the Myers Briggs.)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
5) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Choose individuals to serve the organization who are respected in their communities.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
6) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Choose individuals to serve who are recognized as leaders by their peers.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
7) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Demonstrate ability to conduct an orderly meeting.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
8) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Demonstrate knowledge of the use of goals and objectives in an organization.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
9) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Demonstrate ability to use conflict resolution practices.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
10) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Practice progressiveness (not do things the way they have always been done.)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
11) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Demonstrate ability to use email and the internet.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
12) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Identify how committees are utilized in the Farm Bureau organization.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
13) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Use effective communication skills in media interviews.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
14) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Use effective communication skills in working with groups.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
15) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Use effective communication skills in writing letters.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7

<b>This ability is important:</b>	<b>POLITICAL PROCESS</b>	<b>My proficiency is:</b>
1) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Explain agricultural issues on the county level.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
2) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Analyze agricultural issues on the state level.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Analyze agricultural issues on the national level.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Demonstrate ability to be involved in local government.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
5) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Analyze policy development on issues that affect Farm Bureau on the county level.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
6) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Analyze policy development on issues that affect Farm Bureau on the state level.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
7) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Demonstrate ability to formulate policy.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
8) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Demonstrate knowledge of the political process.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
9) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Choose ways to be more politically active.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
10) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Identify the political structure in Tallahassee.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
11) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Identify the political structure in Washington, D.C.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
12) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Determine how policy decisions made in Tallahassee impact Farm Bureau.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
13) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Determine how policy decisions made in Washington, D.C. impact Farm bureau.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
14) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Develop relationships with elected officials on the county level.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
15) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Develop relationships with elected officials on the state level.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
16) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Develop relationships with elected officials on the national level.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
17) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Support Farm Bureau legislative activities.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
18) 1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Identify the importance of regulatory agencies.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7

19)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Participate in county government meetings impacting agriculture.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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20)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Participate in state government meetings impacting agriculture.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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<b>This ability is important:</b>	<b>EFFECTIVE BOARDS</b>							<b>My proficiency is:</b>							
1)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Participate in Farm Bureau sponsored programs.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

2)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Demonstrate interest in serving on the county Farm Bureau board.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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3)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Employ mutual respect for all board members.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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4)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Demonstrate ability to work together to develop the goals necessary to achieve the vision of the organization.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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5)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Support the organization.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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6)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Support the county president.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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7)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Support board decisions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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8)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Attend board meetings.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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9)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Pay attention to proceedings at meetings.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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10)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Evaluate materials involving issues.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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11)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Up-hold the bylaws of the organization.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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12)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Identify with the business structure in the community.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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13)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Represent Farm Bureau to others in the community.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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14)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Demonstrate ability to work together for the benefit of the whole Farm Bureau organization.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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15)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Demonstrate ability to work together to solve problems.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
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<b>This ability is important</b>	<b>KNOWLEDGE OF FARM BUREAU</b>							<b>My proficiency is:</b>							
1)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Encourage Farm Bureau members to take on additional responsibilities.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

2)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Demonstrate ability to look at future needs of the Farm Bureau organization.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
3)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Identify the role of county Farm Bureaus is to advise the state organization on policy issues.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
4)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Identify the role of county Farm Bureaus is to serve as a spring board for ideas.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
5)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Identify the organizational structure of Farm Bureau.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
6)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Identify the history of Farm Bureau.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
7)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Define grassroots organizations.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
8)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Identify how powerful grassroots organizations can be.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
9)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Identify your role within the Farm Bureau organization.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
10)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Determine how to be a progressive member of the organization.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
11)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Differentiate between the structure and organization of Farm Bureau to other organizations who develop policy.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
12)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Demonstrate a knowledge of the Florida Farm Bureau Federation.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
13)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Demonstrate a knowledge of the American Farm Bureau Federation.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
14)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Participate in events that promote Farm Bureau.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
15)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Participate in events that promote agricultural education.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7
16)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	Participate in media and farm tours.	1 2 3 4 5 6 7

Please tell us about yourself....

1) Years of membership in Farm Bureau: \_\_\_\_\_

2) How long have you been on your county Farm Bureau board? \_\_\_\_\_

3) Have you served as president of a county Farm Bureau board?  
[ ] yes [ ] no  
A) If yes, how many years? \_\_\_\_\_

4) Have you served on the board of the Florida Farm Bureau Federation?  
[ ] yes [ ] no  
A) If yes, how many years? \_\_\_\_\_

5) Has your family been involved in Farm Bureau? [ ] yes [ ] no  
A) If yes, for how many years? \_\_\_\_\_

6) County of residence: \_\_\_\_\_

7) How much time (in hours) do you devote to Farm Bureau each month (includes attending meetings, participating in programs and activities, reading information, etc.?) \_\_\_\_\_

8) How many Farm Bureau events did you attend in the last year (includes meetings, dinners, conventions, etc.)? \_\_\_\_\_

9) Do you belong to other agricultural organizations? [ ] yes [ ] no  
A) If yes, how many? \_\_\_\_\_  
B) Do you have a leadership role in any one or more of these organizations?  
[ ] yes [ ] no  
C) If yes, what is your role? \_\_\_\_\_

10) Do you belong to other organizations (such as community, civic, business, etc.?)  
[ ] yes [ ] no  
A) If yes, how many? \_\_\_\_\_  
B) Do you have a leadership role in any one or more of these organizations?  
[ ] yes [ ] no  
C) If yes, what is your role? \_\_\_\_\_

11) Are you currently serving on the boards of other organizations (such as industry, community, civic, business, etc.?) [ ] yes [ ] no  
A) If yes, how many? \_\_\_\_\_

12) Are you? [ ] married [ ] single

13) Do you have children? [ ] yes [ ] no  
A) If yes, how many? \_\_\_\_\_

14) Gender: [ ] male [ ] female

15) Age: \_\_\_\_\_

16) Were you a member of 4-H? [ ] yes [ ] no  
A) If yes, how many years? \_\_\_\_\_

17) Were you a member of FFA? [ ] yes [ ] no  
A) If yes, how many years? \_\_\_\_\_

18) Were you a member of other youth development organizations?  
[ ] yes [ ] no  
A) If yes, how many years? \_\_\_\_\_

19) Have you participated in leadership development programs (such as Leadership Florida, Wedgworth Leadership Institute, Rotary Leadership Programs?)  
[ ] yes [ ] no  
A) If yes, how many? \_\_\_\_\_

20) Your agricultural income is derived from (please check all that apply):

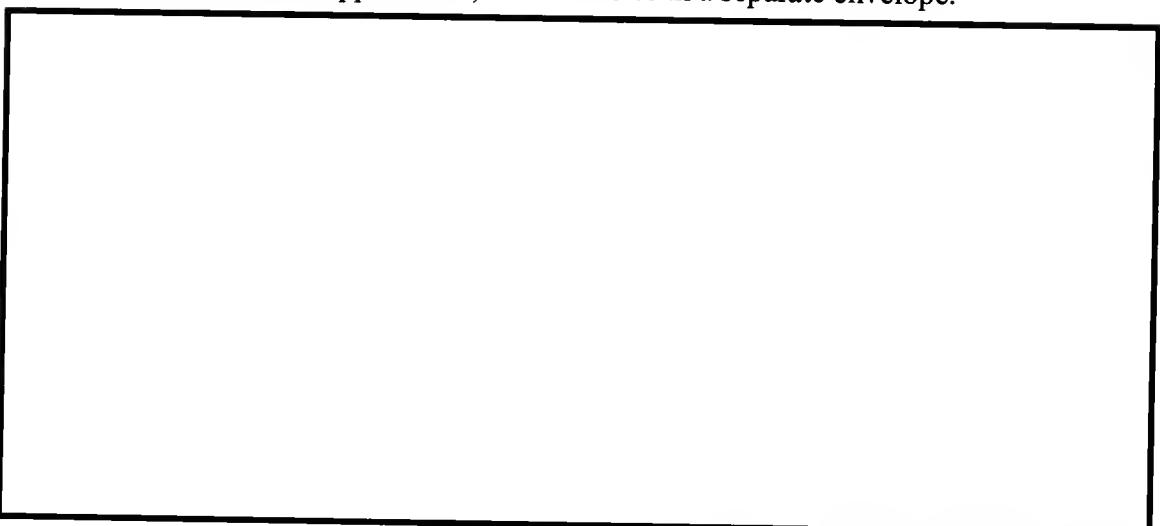
[ ] aquaculture	[ ] citrus	[ ] other (please specify)
[ ] dairy	[ ] equine	
[ ] forestry	[ ] fruit	
[ ] grain	[ ] horticulture	
[ ] livestock	[ ] peanuts	
[ ] poultry	[ ] sugarcane	
[ ] tobacco	[ ] vegetables	

21) Farm size (in acres): \_\_\_\_\_

22) Do you work off farm? [ ] yes [ ] no  
A) If yes, what is your occupation? \_\_\_\_\_

***Thank you for participating in this survey!***

Your comments will be appreciated, either here or in a separate envelope.



APPENDIX E  
SURVEY FOR ACTIVE MEMBERS

*Florida Farm Bureau  
Leadership Survey*



*Please return your completed questionnaire  
in the enclosed envelope to:*

*Hannah Carter  
1928 SW 42<sup>nd</sup> Dr. #E  
Gainesville, FL 32607*

**Please read each statement and circle the appropriate responses on the 7 point scale from 1=strongly disagree to 7=strongly agree.**

(Example: It is important to me that others  
approve of my behavior. .... 1    2    3    **4**    5    6    7)

	Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree			
1. It is important to me that others approve of my behavior. ....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. Decisions I make will reflect high standards that I've set for myself. ....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. I only like to do things that are fun. ....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. Job requirements dictate how much effort I exert during work. ....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. I often make decisions based on what others will think. ....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. If I didn't enjoy doing my job at work I would leave. ....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. A day's work for a day's pay. ....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. I often put off work so that I can do something else that is more fun. ....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. I would work harder if I knew that my effort would lead to higher pay. ....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. I work harder on a project if public recognition is attached to it. ....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. When choosing jobs I usually choose the one that sounds like the most fun. ....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. When choosing jobs I usually choose the one that pays the most. ....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

		Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree		
13. If choosing jobs I want one that allows me to be recognized for successes. ....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. I consider myself a self-motivated person. ....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. The people I choose to spend my time with are the most fun to be with. ....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16. At work, my favorite day of the week is 'payday.' ....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17. I try to make sure that my decisions are consistent with my personal standards of behavior. ....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18. I like to do things which give me a sense of personal achievement. ....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19. It is important that I work for a company that allows me to use my skills and talents. .	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20. If choosing between two jobs, the most important criteria is 'which is more fun?'....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21. People should always keep their eyes and ears open for better job opportunities. .	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22. I give my best effort when I know that it will be seen by the most influential people in an organization. ....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23. I need to know that my skills and values are impacting organization's success. ....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24. Those people who make the most friends have lived the fullest lives. ....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

**When you think about volunteering, what comes to mind? For the following pairs of words, place an “X” in the space nearest to the word of each pair that represents your views towards volunteering. Please be sure to mark each scale. Mark only one “X” for each pair of words.**

(Example: Boring \_\_\_\_\_ **X** \_\_\_\_\_ Interesting)

**Volunteering**

1. Good	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Bad
2. Passive	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Active
3. Youthful	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Mature
4. Negative	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Positive
5. Meaningful	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Meaningless
6. Constrained	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Free
7. Complex	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Simple
8. Masculine	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Feminine
9. Boring	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Interesting
10. Important	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Unimportant
11. Intentional	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Unintentional
12. Serious	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	Humorous

**Why would you serve on a county Farm Bureau board? Please read each statement and indicate your response by circling the appropriate number on the 7 point scale from 1=strongly disagree to 7=strongly agree.**

(Example: I am satisfied with the Farm Bureau organization and it's goals. . . . 1    2    3    **4**    5    6    7)

	Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree	
<b>I would serve on a county Farm Bureau board because:</b>								
1. I have a desire to be more involved in the Farm Bureau organization. ....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
2. I am satisfied with the Farm Bureau organization and it's goals. ....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
3. I believe it is important to attend all Farm Bureau functions (meetings, activities, programs, etc.) ....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
4. I am willing to help recruit more Farm Bureau members. ....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
5. I believe my county Farm Bureau board is active and accomplishing it's goals. . .	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
6. Family members have served on the board and now it's my turn. ....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
7. I believe I work effectively with individuals and groups. ....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
8. I understand politics and the policy development process. ....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
9. I am comfortable speaking to individuals, groups and the media. ....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
10. I am able to seek out alternative solutions to problems. ....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
11. I am comfortable with technology and the use of email and the internet. . .	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
12. I would enjoy the recognition of being a board member. ....	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	

**Please tell us about yourself....**

1. Years of membership in Farm Bureau: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Has your family been involved in Farm Bureau? [ ] yes [ ] no  
A) If yes, for how many years? \_\_\_\_\_
3. County of residence: \_\_\_\_\_
4. How much time (in hours) do you devote to Farm Bureau each month (includes attending meetings, participating in programs and activities, reading information, etc.?) \_\_\_\_\_
5. How many Farm Bureau events did you attend in the last year (includes meetings, dinners, conventions, etc.)? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Do you belong to other agricultural organizations? [ ] yes [ ] no  
A) If yes, how many? \_\_\_\_\_  
B) Do you have a leadership role in any one or more of these organizations? [ ] yes [ ] no  
C) If yes, what is your role? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Do you belong to other organizations (such as community, civic, business, etc.?)  
[ ] yes [ ] no  
A) If yes, how many? \_\_\_\_\_  
B) Do you have a leadership role in any one or more of these organizations?  
[ ] yes [ ] no  
C) If yes, what is your role? \_\_\_\_\_
8. Are you currently serving on the boards of other organizations (such as industry, community, civic, business, etc.)? [ ] yes [ ] no  
A) If yes, how many? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Are you? [ ] married [ ] single
10. Do you have children? [ ] yes [ ] no  
A) If yes, how many? \_\_\_\_\_
11. Gender: [ ] male [ ] female
12. Age: \_\_\_\_\_
13. Were you a member of 4-H? [ ] yes [ ] no  
A) If yes, how many years? \_\_\_\_\_
14. Were you a member of FFA? [ ] yes [ ] no  
A) If yes, how many years? \_\_\_\_\_
15. Were you a member of other youth development organizations? [ ] yes [ ] no  
A) If yes, how many years? \_\_\_\_\_

16. Have you participated in leadership development programs (such as Leadership Florida, Wedgworth Leadership Institute, Rotary Leadership Programs?)

[ ] yes [ ] no

A) If yes, how many? \_\_\_\_\_

17. Your agricultural income is derived from (please check all that apply):

[ ] aquaculture	[ ] citrus	[ ] other (please specify)
[ ] dairy	[ ] equine	
[ ] forestry	[ ] fruit	
[ ] grain	[ ] horticulture	
[ ] livestock	[ ] peanuts	
[ ] poultry	[ ] sugarcane	
[ ] tobacco	[ ] vegetables	

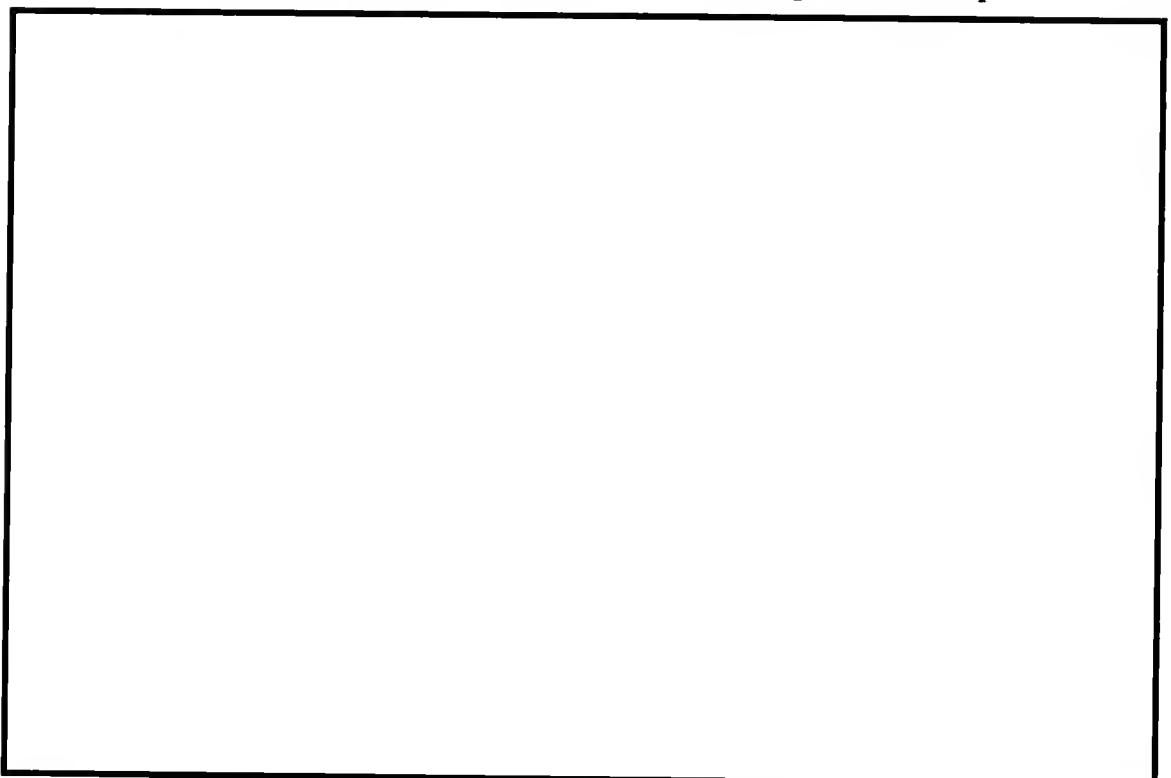
18. Farm size (in acres): \_\_\_\_\_

19. Do you work off farm? [ ] yes [ ] no

A) If yes, what is your occupation? \_\_\_\_\_

*Thank you for completing this survey!*

**Your comments will be appreciated, either here or in a separate envelope.**



## APPENDIX F FIRST LETTER TO ACTIVE MEMBERS

Date

«FirstName» «LastName»  
«Address1»  
«City», «State» «PostalCode»

Dear «FirstName»,

Within the next few days, you will receive a request to complete a brief questionnaire. We are mailing it to you in an effort to learn what motivates Farm Bureau members to take a more active role in the organization.

This survey is being conducted to better inform the Florida Farm Bureau Federation on the leadership needs and expectations of its members. The information will aid in the understanding of what motivates individuals to participate in organizations, their attitudes towards volunteering and serving on county Farm Bureau boards. This information will be used to develop future leadership training programs for Farm Bureau members.

We would greatly appreciate your taking the few minutes necessary to complete and return your questionnaire.

Thank you in advance for your help.

Sincerely,

Hannah Carter  
Graduate Student  
Department of Agricultural Education  
and Communication  
University of Florida

## APPENDIX G

### SECOND LETTER TO ACTIVE MEMBERS

Date

Name  
Address 1  
City, State Zip Code

Dear Name,

The Florida Farm Bureau Federation is interested in learning about the leadership expectations and perceptions of its members. This information will be used for the development of leadership-training programs for Farm Bureau members.

You have been chosen to participate in a study, which will measure what motivates individuals to participate in Farm Bureau, your attitudes towards volunteering and serving on county Farm Bureau boards. Your name was randomly selected from a list of all Florida Farm Bureau members. In order that the results of the study truly represent the thinking of Farm Bureau members, it is important that each questionnaire be completed and returned in the envelope provided.

You may be assured of complete confidentiality. The questionnaire has an identification number for mailing purposes only. This is so that we may check your name off the mailing list when your questionnaire is returned. Your name will never be placed on the questionnaire itself, nor will your answers be tied to your name in any way.

Per IRB guidelines, we are to notify you that no risk of physical, psychological, or economic harm to participants is foreseen. There is no monetary compensation to you for participation. Your identity will be kept confidential to the extent provided by law. Your name will not be used in any report. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. There is no penalty for not participating. You do not have to answer any questions you do not want to answer. You have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without consequence. Participation in the study will be the duration for completion of the questionnaire, approximately 20 minutes.

For questions about your rights as a research participant please contact the University of Florida Institutional Review Board at [irb2@ufl.edu](mailto:irb2@ufl.edu) or 352-392-0433.

UF IRB Approval # 2003-U-992

I would be happy to answer any questions you may have about this study. Please email me at [hscarter@mail.ifas.ufl.edu](mailto:hscarter@mail.ifas.ufl.edu) or call me at (352) 264-9777.

Thank you very much for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Hannah Carter  
University of Florida  
Dept. of Agricultural Education & Communication

## APPENDIX H POSTCARD TO ACTIVE MEMBERS

Last week, a questionnaire seeking your opinions about leadership expectations and perceptions of members of Florida Farm Bureau was mailed to you. Your name was randomly selected from a list of all Farm Bureau members.

If you have already completed and returned the questionnaire, please accept our sincere thanks. If not, please do so today. We are especially grateful for your help because we believe your response will be very useful to Florida Farm Bureau and your county organization.

If you did not receive a questionnaire, or if it was misplaced, please email me at [hscarter@mail.ifas.ufl.edu](mailto:hscarter@mail.ifas.ufl.edu) or call (352) 264-9777 and I will get another one in the mail to you today.

Sincerely,

Hannah Carter  
Department of Agricultural Education  
and Communication  
University of Florida

## APPENDIX I

### FOURTH LETTER TO ACTIVE MEMBERS

Date

Name

Address 1

City, State, Postal Code

Dear ~Name~,

About three weeks ago, we wrote to you seeking your opinions about the leadership expectations and perceptions of Florida Farm Bureau members. As of today, we have not received your completed questionnaire. We realize that you may not have had time to complete it. However, we would genuinely appreciate hearing from you.

The study is being conducted so that Florida Farm Bureau members like yourself, can help in the development of future programs offered for Farm Bureau members. Your name was randomly selected from a list of all Florida Farm Bureau members. We are writing to you again because the study's usefulness depends on our receiving a questionnaire from each respondent.

In the event that your questionnaire has been misplaced, a replacement is enclosed. We would be happy to answer any questions you have about the study. Please email me at [hscarter@mail.ifas.ufl.edu](mailto:hscarter@mail.ifas.ufl.edu) or call me at (352) 264-9777.

Thank you very much for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Hannah Carter  
Graduate Student  
Department of Agricultural Education  
and Communication  
University of Florida

**APPENDIX J**  
**FIRST LETTER TO COUNTY BOARD MEMBERS**

Date

Name

Address 1

City, State, Postal Code

Dear ~Name~,

Within the next few days, you will receive a request to complete a brief questionnaire. We are mailing it to you in an effort to measure the leadership expectations and perceptions of Florida Farm Bureau county board members.

This survey is being conducted to better inform the Florida Farm Bureau Federation on the leadership needs and expectations of those members who are serving on county Farm Bureau boards. The information will be used to develop future leadership training programs for county board members.

We would greatly appreciate your taking the few minutes necessary to complete and return your questionnaire.

Thank you in advance for your help.

Sincerely,

Hannah Carter  
Graduate Student  
Department of Agricultural Education  
and Communication  
University of Florida

## APPENDIX K SECOND LETTER TO COUNTY BOARD MEMBERS

Date

Name  
Address 1  
City, State Zip Code

Dear Name,

As a member of the board of your county's Farm Bureau organization, you may have certain expectations and perceptions about leadership and what it takes to be an effective county board member. The Florida Farm Bureau Federation is interested in your opinions to develop meaningful leadership-training programs for county board members.

You have been chosen to participate in a study, which will measure your leadership expectations and perceptions. Your name was randomly selected from a list of all county board members in Florida. In order that the results of the study truly represent the thinking of county board members, it is important that each questionnaire be completed and returned in the envelope provided.

You may be assured of complete confidentiality. The questionnaire has an identification number for mailing purposes only. This is so that we may check your name off the mailing list when your questionnaire is returned. Your name will never be placed on the questionnaire itself, nor will your answers be tied to your name in any way.

Per IRB guidelines, we are to notify you that no risk of physical, psychological, or economic harm to participants is foreseen. There is no monetary compensation to you for participation. Your identity will be kept confidential to the extent provided by law. Your name will not be used in any report. Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. There is no penalty for not participating. You do not have to answer any questions you do not want to answer. You have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without consequence. Participation in the study will be the duration for completion of the questionnaire, approximately 30 minutes.

For questions about your rights as a research participant please contact the University of Florida Institutional Review Board at [irb2@ufl.edu](mailto:irb2@ufl.edu) or 352-392-0433.

UF IRB Approval # 2003-U-992

I would be happy to answer any questions you may have about this study. Please email me at [hscarter@mail.ifas.ufl.edu](mailto:hscarter@mail.ifas.ufl.edu) or call me at (352) 264-9777.

Thank you very much for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Hannah Carter  
University of Florida  
Department of Agricultural Education & Communication

## APPENDIX L POSTCARD TO COUNTY BOARD MEMBERS

Last week, a questionnaire seeking your opinions about leadership expectations and perceptions of county board members of Florida Farm Bureau was mailed to you. Your name was randomly selected from a list of all county Farm Bureau board members.

If you have already completed and returned the questionnaire, please accept our sincere thanks. If not, please do so today. We are especially grateful for your help because we believe your response will be very useful to Florida Farm Bureau and your county organization.

If you did not receive a questionnaire, or if it was misplaced, please email me at [hscarter@mail.ifas.ufl.edu](mailto:hscarter@mail.ifas.ufl.edu) or call (352) 264-9777 and I will get another one in the mail to you today.

Sincerely,

Hannah Carter  
Department of Agricultural Education  
and Communication  
University of Florida

APPENDIX M  
FOURTH LETTER TO COUNTY BOARD MEMBERS

Date

Name  
Address 1  
City, State, Postal Code

Dear ~Name~,

About three weeks ago, we wrote to you seeking your opinions about your expectations and perceptions about leadership and what it takes to be an effective county board member. As of today, we have not received your completed questionnaire. We realize that you may not have had time to complete it. However, we would genuinely appreciate hearing from you.

The study is being conducted so that county Farm Bureau board members like yourself, can help in the development of future programs offered for county board members. Your name was randomly selected from a list of all county board members in Florida. We are writing to you again because the study's usefulness depends on our receiving a questionnaire from each respondent.

In the event that your questionnaire has been misplaced, a replacement is enclosed. We would be happy to answer any questions you have about the study. Please email me at [hscarter@mail.ifas.ufl.edu](mailto:hscarter@mail.ifas.ufl.edu) or call me at (352) 264-9777.

Thank you very much for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Hannah Carter  
Graduate Student  
Department of Agricultural Education  
and Communication  
University of Florida

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## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

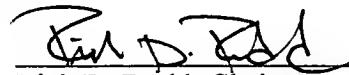
Hannah Sewall Farnham Carter was born on May 10, 1973, in Caribou, Maine. She grew up surrounded by the potato fields of Aroostook County and developed a deep love and appreciation for agriculture. Growing up, she was actively involved in 4-H and FFA. Upon graduation from Washburn District High School in 1991 she entered the University of Maine. After her freshman year, she transferred to the University of Maine at Presque Isle and also began her career with the University of Maine Cooperative Extension (UMCE), which served clientele in the potato industry. After graduating with her B.S. degree in biology in May, 1995, she continued her employment with UMCE.

In the fall of 1997, she left the potato fields and moved to sunny Florida where she began working on her master's degree in agricultural education and communication at the University of Florida. For her master's thesis she evaluated the Florida Leadership Program for Agriculture and Natural Resources. After graduating with her M.S. in the fall of 1999, she returned to Maine and UMCE and ran the Integrated Pest Management Program for potatoes.

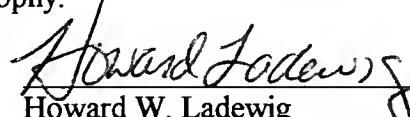
In 2000, she returned to the University of Florida to be part of the first class of PhD students in the Department of Agricultural Education and Communication. In addition to working on her doctorate in agricultural leadership, she also worked as the program coordinator for the Florida Leadership Program, now called the Wedgeworth Leadership Institute for Agriculture and Natural Resources. After graduating with her PhD in August of 2004, she will become a faculty member in the Department of

Agricultural Education and Communication; with this appointment she will direct the Wedgworth Leadership Institute and teach undergraduate and graduate classes on leadership development.

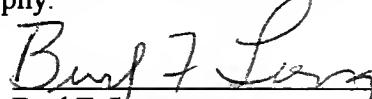
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\_\_\_\_\_  
Rick D. Rudd, Chair  
Associate Professor of Agricultural  
Education and Communication

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

  
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Howard W. Ladewig  
Professor of Agricultural Education  
and Communication

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Burl F. Long  
Professor of Food and Resource  
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I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

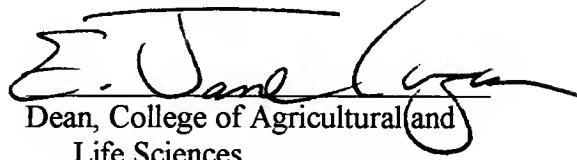
  
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Nick T. Place  
Assistant Professor of Agricultural  
Education and Communication

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

  
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Eugene E. Trotter  
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This dissertation was submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences and to the Graduate School and was accepted as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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